Georgia State University
Digital Archive @ GSU

Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology Dissertations

Department of Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology

12-12-2010

Passing as Literate: Gender, Dyslexia, and the Shaping of Identities

Ellen Burns Hurst
Georgia State University, ellenburnshurst@yahoo.com

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalarchive.gsu.edu/msit_diss

Recommended Citation
Hurst, Ellen Burns, "Passing as Literate: Gender, Dyslexia, and the Shaping of Identities" (2010). *Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology Dissertations.* Paper 71.

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology at Digital Archive @ GSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Archive @ GSU. For more information, please contact digitalarchive@gsu.edu.

ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, PASSING AS LITERATE: GENDER, DYSLEXIA, AND THE SHAPING OF IDENTITIES, by ELLEN BURNS HURST, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chair, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty. The Dean of the College of Education concurs.

Mary Ariail, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

Amy Seely Flint, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Dana L. Fox, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Patricia Carter, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Date

Dana L. Fox, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Middle-Secondary
Education and Instructional Technology

R. W. Kamphaus, Ph.D.
Dean and Distinguished Research Professor
College of Education

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

By presenting this dissertation as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the advanced degree from Georgia State University, I agree that the library of Georgia State University shall make it available for inspection and circulation in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I agree that permission to quote, to copy from, or to publish from this dissertation may be granted by the professor under whose direction it was written, by the College of Education's director of graduate studies and research, or by me. Such quoting, copying, or publishing must be solely for scholarly purposes and will not involve financial gain. It is understood that any copying from or publication of this dissertation which involves potential financial gain will not be allowed without my written permission.

_____

Ellen Burns Hurst

NOTICE TO BORROWERS

All dissertations deposited in the Georgia State University library must be used in accordance with the stipulations prescribed by the author in the preceding statement. The author of this dissertation is:

Ellen Burns Hurst
1156 Hampton Hall Drive
Atlanta, GA 30319

The director of this dissertation is:

Dr. Mary Ariail
Department of Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology
College of Education
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30303

CURRICULUM VITAE
Ellen Burns Hurst

ADDRESS 1156 Hampton Hall Drive
Atlanta, Georgia 30319

EDUCATION

Ph.D. 2010 Georgia State University
Teaching and Learning: Language and Literacy
Department of Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology

Ed.S 1986 Georgia State University
Vocational and Career Development

M.Ed. 1980 Georgia State University
Reading Specialist

A.B. 1975 Georgia State University
Elementary Education

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

Classes Taught

2010	Supervision of Interns and Student Teachers, Department of Early Childhood, GSU
2010	Critical Issues in Education, Department of Education, Georgia Gwinnett College
2009-2010	Assessment in Early Childhood, Department of Early Childhood, GSU
2008	Writer's Workshop, Teaching Internship, Department of Middle, Secondary and Instructional Technology, GSU
2007-2009	Regents' Reading Skills, Department of Middle, Secondary and Instructional Technology, GSU

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Puvirajah , A., Schoene, M., Hurst, E.(2010) *A teacher's role in facilitating scientific inquiry for her environmental science students.* . Presented at the American Educational Research Association, Denver, Colorado.

Zisook, K. & Hurst, E. (February, 2009). *Writers who run with the wolves*. Presented at 16th Annual Institute for Women's Studies Student Research Symposium, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

Hurst, E. & Zisook, K. (February, 2009). *After school writing clubs.* Presented at Conference on Literacy, Urban Issues, and Social Studies Education, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.

Hurst E. (February 2008) *Myths/misconceptions about dyslexia, Presented* at Conference on Literacy, Urban Issues, and Social Studies Education, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.

Hurst E. (February 2008) *Title I reading teacher self-efficacy* Presented at Conference on Literacy, Urban Issues, and Social Studies Education, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.

Hurst, E. (November, 2008*) 10 mini lessons for ELL writers* Presented at Southern Association of Colleges and Schools State Conference Workshop Presentation:

flint, A., Ariail, M., Fisher, T., Kurumada, K., Zisook, K., & Hurst, E. (December, 2008). Changing "Yes, but…" to "How can…?": Reframing identities among teachers of writing. Presented at National Reading Conference, Orlando, FL.

ARTICLE UNDER REVIEW

Hurst, E. (2009) *Dyslexia: Myths and misconceptions*, Georgia Journal of Reading, Spring 2010 (Rewrite and Resubmit).

PAPERS

Flint,A., Ariail, M., Hurst, E., Fisher,T., Kurumada, K., & Zisook, K. Changing *"Yes, but. . ." to "How can. . .?"*: Reframing identities among teachers of writing. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Puvirajah, A.,Ariail, M., Hurst, E. *Undergraduate STEM Students' Interest in and perceptions of science and mathematics teachings as a career choice: A report of the 2009 Focus Grant Implemented by the MSIT Department of the College of Education*

ABSTRACT

PASSING AS LITERATE: GENDER, DYSLEXIA AND
THE SHAPING OF IDENTITIES
by
Ellen Burns Hurst

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the ways in which currently diagnosed dyslexic females, who navigated adolescence and their concomitant schooling without a definitive diagnosis of dyslexia, negotiated their identities in the figured world of school. To explore this phenomenon, it was necessary to understand the complexity of dyslexia as well as the theoretical underpinnings of identity construction, adolescence, and "passing as literate." This case study is informed by poststructuralist thought; through this lens I examine how my subjects perceived their worlds and how they negotiated the challenges associated with undiagnosed dyslexia. As they describe their positions in their figured worlds, I search for issues of power, identity and agency around which their lives appear to be organized.

The answers to the following research questions were sought: (1) How do adult women who were undiagnosed dyslexic girls reflect upon their negotiations of identity in the figured world of school (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain (1998)? (2) Is there evidence that girls attempt to pass as literate? If so, what types of "passing" attempts and techniques are used by dyslexic adolescent girls to appear more literate? Case study methodology offers the insight provided by detailed narratives of personal experiences. Data was collected by interviews, observations and researcher's field notes obtained through the stories of three adult dyslexic women. The data was analyzed for affirming or conflicting themes. The stories were retold in a chronological and thematic pattern describing the participants' experiences from different perspectives.

PASSING AS LITERATE:GENDER, DYSLEXIA AND THE SHAPING OF IDENTITIES

by

Ellen Burns Hurst

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the
Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Teaching and Learning
in
the Department of Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology
in
the College of Education
Georgia State University

Atlanta, Georgia
2010

Copyright by
Ellen Burns Hurst
2010

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the courage of the three women who made this study possible. It is my hope that their telling of their struggles will inform the teachers of today and tomorrow about the challenges facing individuals with dyslexia.

To my dissertation chair, Dr. Mary Ariail, I owe my understandings of identity, the research process and the ethics and collegiality of academia. With her guidance and with the many opportunities she provided me from the very beginning of my doctoral program, I view my belated start in academia as an opportunity rather that an impediment. I would also like to give my warmest thanks to her for offering her friendship in only the way that a mentor can by listening, questioning, talking, and keeping me off the ledge.

I extend special gratitude to my committee members who each guided my work from their specialty areas. Dr. Amy Flint, Dr. Patricia Carter, and Dr. Dana Fox have placed their unique marks on my identity as an academic. With your support, my journey was rich and meaningful, and this work more robust.

Many thanks and appreciation is also given to my children Eric, Zac and Elizabeth. Their fearless life choices and extraordinary successes provide continuous inspiration. A special thanks to Dr. Eric Hurst. To have a child as a mentor is a unique and wonderful experience. From my first steps into the library, to learning the tricks of negotiating registration, he has held my hand.

And finally, to my husband, Michael, I give thanks for being there through it all. His expectations for my success have always exceeded my own. He has been unfaltering in his gentle push and generous with praise and encouragement. He celebrated my successes and held me during moments of despair. Without his love, this journey would have remained a dream.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page
List of Tables iv

Chapter
1 INTRODUCTION 1
The Problem 1
Purpose 4
Theoretical Framework 5

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE 15
Nature of Dyslexia 16
Dyslexia Misconceptions 18
Views of Adolescence 19
The Construction of a Gendered Literacy Identity 23
Once the Damage is Done: Spoiled Identity and "Passing as Literate" 29
Conclusion 32

3 METHODOLOGY 35
Why Case Study? 35
Participants and Research Setting 38
Trustworthiness 45
Data Analysis 47
Limitations of the Study 52

4 RESULTS 54
The Penitents and Their Negotiations of the Figured World of School 56
Passing as Literate 96
Summary of Results 114

5 DISCUSSION 119
Classroom Practices 121
Passing as Literate 133
Implications for Classroom Practice 136
Suggestions for Further Research 139
Summary 142

References 144
Appendix 162

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

1 Overview of Data Collection and Data Analysis 44

2 Data Sources 46

3 Overview of Codes and Subcodes 49

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time there lived a beautiful prom queen. This prom queen resembles the Prom Queen that Lesko (1984) describes in her critical ethnography of a Catholic high school in the Midwestern, blue collar city of Port Gilbert. She possesses all the requisite physical characteristics that one might expect in a fantasy queen. She has golden tresses, blue eyes, porcelain skin, perfect white smile, and a voluptuous body. She gives the illusion of developed sexuality without denying the possibility of innocence. She shares a special membership in the school as a combination of loner and outsider, while also being group oriented and organizationally committed. She has the ability to mediate conflicting cultural categories within her high school population because she has the genius of communication. She could be characterized as a cultural heroine in that she unifies the individual and the collective (Lesko, 1984). Our prom queen differs significantly in one aspect of her life. She lives with a secret that she keeps hidden throughout her middle and high school years. This young woman walked into my office and set this research into motion. This vision of perfection had one veiled flaw. She was an undiagnosed dyslexic.

The Problem

The International Dyslexia Association (2009) reports that about 13 to14% of the school population nationwide has a handicapping condition that qualifies them for special education. Of this population, one-half of all the students who qualify for special education are classified as having a learning disability (LD) (6–7%). About 85% of those LD students have a primary learning disability in reading and language processing. Yet,

as many as 15-20% of the population as a whole have some of the symptoms of dyslexia. These symptoms include slow or inaccurate reading, poor spelling, poor writing, or mixing up similar words. Whether or not these students will qualify for special education is uncertain, but what is certain is they are likely to struggle with many aspects of the learning process.

Researchers assumed for years that many more boys than girls were dyslexic (Rutter, 2004; Shaywitz, 2003). This assumption was based on the fact that more boys than girls are referred to dyslexia centers, reading centers or reading clinics. Between three and four times as many boys as girls have been reported as being dyslexic, but experts have questioned for some time whether there might be some gender bias in the referral figures. This gender bias is potentially based on essentialized gender normative behavioral differences in which boys with dyslexia tend to express their frustration by acting up and causing trouble while dyslexic girls tend to internalize their feelings and withdraw(Shaywitz & Fletcher, 1999). Logic follows that parents and schools are far more likely to seek help for a disruptive child than a quiet one (Gardner, 2008).

As we work to deconstruct the masculinized educational framework in an attempt to make the system more equitable, often forgotten are the “can do” girls, those who are flexible, independent and are following non-linear trajectories to success (Harris, 2004), who are experiencing academic difficulty. The essentialized gender normative behavior of boys and the moral panics associated with drug use, sexual promiscuity and teenage pregnancy (Becker, 1963; Wilkins, 1964; Young, 1971) surrounding at-risk girls demand most of the attention of educational researchers and policy makers. Gilligan (1982) claims that girls tend to be affiliative by nature and that the fear of possible peer rejection

may result in sustained levels of anxiety and group compliance. Could this compliance obscure academic problems and create the educational isolation? (LaGreca & Stone, 1990; Siperstein & Bak, 1988). As the scientific understandings of dyslexia evolve and neuroscientists learn more about brain function as it relates to reading disabilities, why are so many girls still going undiagnosed?

Historically, much of the focus on policy, practice, and research on gender and education has been on issues related to boys (Rowan, et al., 2002; Brozo, 2002). The tide shifted with the publication of a number of reports and popular books about girls and their educational disadvantages. The American Association of University Women (AAUW) published the much touted report of *How Schools Shortchange Girls* (1992). The focus of this report is the argument that current curricula and pedagogy are educationally depriving girls. In addition, books such as *Failing at Fairness* (Sadker & Sadker, 1994), *School Girls* (Orenstein, 1994), and *Reviving Ophelia* (Pipher, 1994), address the psychological damage and educational neglect to which girls are subjected in the male dominated classroom. According to these authors, girls are called on less often by teachers, show less involvement and achievement in math and science, and receive fewer and lower-quality comments from teachers.

The question of gendered difference in the presentation of dyslexic symptoms has been addressed by several important studies. Dr Sally Shaywitz, co-director of The Center for the Study of Learning and Attention Disorders at Yale University, conducted a longitudinal study involving 445 children. She followed their progress from the time they entered kindergarten until the age of nine. The study revealed that schools identified more than four times as many eight- year-old boys as girls as dyslexic. In addition, more than

twice as many nine-year-old boys as girls were said to have reading problems. However, when the researchers tested the children independently, they found equal numbers of boys and girls in both years had reading problems (Shaywitz & Fletcher, 1999).

Another large-scale study (Rutter, 2004) reinforces the assumption that boys are more likely to be dyslexic than girls. Researchers from the Universities of Warwick in Coventry and King's College London examined nearly 10,000 children aged seven to 15. These students had been given standard reading tests in Britain and New Zealand. None of the children had been identified as having reading difficulties. These results indicated that between 18 and 22 per cent of the boys were dyslexics, compared with 8 to 13 per cent of the girls.

Schools were identifying four times as many boys as girls a decade ago. However, Rutter’s (2004) large-scale study suggests there are perhaps twice as many dyslexic boys as girls, not three or four times as many. Furthermore, the study at Yale of 400 Connecticut children indicates that the numbers of dyslexic girls and boys are about equal and that most discrepancies in the diagnosis of dyslexia are the result of gender normative behavior in that dyslexic girls tend to behave better and work harder than dyslexic boys (Shaywitz, 1999).

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the negotiation of identities by undiagnosed dyslexic adolescent girls through case study analysis of adult dyslexic women whose initial diagnosis of dyslexia did not occur until after high school. To fully explain this phenomenon, it is necessary to understand the complexity of dyslexia as well as the theoretical underpinnings of identity construction, adolescence and “passing as

literate." Informed by the framework of poststructural thought, I examine how my subjects perceived their worlds and how they negotiated peers, assets, limitations and behaviors. As they reveal their positions in their figured worlds, I search for issues of power, identity and agency around which their lives became organized.

The answers to the following research questions were sought: (1) How do adult women who were undiagnosed dyslexic girls reflect upon their negotiations of identity in the figured world of school (Holland et al., 1998)? (2) Is there evidence that they use attempts of passing as literate? If so, what types of "passing" attempts and techniques are used by dyslexic adolescent girls to appear more literate and cross from the position of peripheral participant in the figured world of school into that of a position of expert (Lave & Wagner, 1991)? The case study methodology offers the opportunity for the insight provided by detailed narratives of personal experiences. Data was collected by interviews, observations, and researcher's field notes. The data was analyzed for affirming or conflicting themes and intergenerational connectedness. The stories are then retold in a chronological and thematic pattern describing the participants' experiences from as many perspectives as possible.

Theoretical Framework

For many years, theories have been proposed to explain identity. Most of these explanations have assumed that one's identity is based on a central and coherent core. Erikson (1968) proposed a fixed or true identity that determines who a person is as well as the relative power he or she possesses. Poststructuralist thought challenges the notion of a singular, coherent self and explains the self as being plural, unstable, and constantly in flux. Multiple characterizations of identity from a poststructural perspective include terms such as "contradictory," "precarious," and "reconstituted" (Broughton & Fairbanks,

2002). A particular strength of the poststructuralist perspective is that it recognizes the essential force of discourse, the way one talks about the self, and at the same time recognizes that people are capable of exercising choice in relation to those discourses. Culler (1982) provides a succinct epistemological thesis relative to poststructuralist view of experience and identity. “Experience always has a divided, duplicitous character: it has always already occurred and yet is still to be produced-an indispensible point of reference, yet never simply there” (p.63). This challenging poststructuralist perspective provides a seductive canvas on which to paint an interwoven theoretical framework that is informed by a variety of thinkers. Holland et al., (1998) add richness to the theoretical landscape by extending our understanding of identities through their explanation of the construct of figured worlds.

Identities: Do We Have More Than One?

The concept of identity in figured worlds was first introduced in *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds (*Holland et al., 1998). Drawing from different schools of thought, including culturalism, constructivism, and universalism, the concept of identity formation as a traditional static state is usurped by a process of reconstructions that are constantly being negotiated in the social interactions that take place in cultural spaces. No longer prey to the labels placed on themselves and others, individuals come to ‘‘figure’’ out their identities in the ‘‘worlds’’ in which they participate (Urretta, 2007). Thus, identities develop within and through social practices in multiple contexts (Boaler & Greeno, 2000; Holland et al., 1998).

Bakhtin (1981) also viewed identities as being constructed in social contexts with words and languages. Words and languages provide the social perspectives through

which we author the world. The process of authoring the world is a dialogic process that involves a continual and conflicting dialogue between the “I” and the world. Words are complex in that they are always partially someone else’s. They are received from others already tainted with the sender’s intentions and purposes. Once words are infused with one’s own intention, the individual’s Voice is heard. This process of authoring the self is tantamount to developing one’s self. To be me, I must understand myself from the perspective of others. I must reach outsideness.

Identities construction in the social context of school creates a unique context that incorporates discourse communities (Gee, 1996) and communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1998). Schooling is not only a social phenomenon, constituted in the experienced, lived in world, but it is also a social context that provides the social dynamics of the world within which students learn and construct their learner identities (Lave & Wenger, 1998)

Worlds of Identities

This idea is exemplified in a description of the figured worlds of school. As ‘‘socially and culturally constructed realm[s] of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others (Holland et al.,1998, p. 52).” Figured worlds are socially produced, culturally constituted activities, where people come to conceptually and materially perform new identities. Figured worlds have four characteristics:

1. Figured worlds are a cultural phenomenon, to which people are recruited, or into which people enter, and that develop through the work of their participants;
2. Figured worlds function as contexts of meaning within which social encounters have significance and people's positions matter. Activities relevant to these worlds take meaning from them and are situated in particular times and places;
3. Figured worlds are socially organized and reproduced, which means that in them people are sorted and learn to relate to each other in different ways;
4. Figured worlds distribute people by relating them to landscapes of action; thus activities related to the worlds are populated by familiar social types and host to individual senses of self.

How Are We Positioned?

Positionality is defined as the places or perspectives from which individuals shape their actions (Holland et al., 1998). A variety of possible positional choices exists because there are many and contradictory discursive practices in which each person can engage (Davies & Harré, 1990). Many positions are culturally imposed as a result of societal expectations and may necessitate the performance of conventional or stereotypical positions. These socially expected positions are often different than those assumed at other times or in other contexts. Culture-specific story lines are exemplified by roles such as student, daughter, or athlete. Once positioned, a person sees the world from the vantage point of that position, at that moment, and in terms of the images, metaphors,

stories and concepts which are relevant to the discursive practice in which they are positioned.

From this vantage point, individuals can gain new perspectives on the world and through them learn to view peers, assets, limitations and behaviors with new meaning, passion or emotion. Figured worlds also provide individuals the capacity to influence their own behavior in these worlds. As individuals assume positions in their figured worlds, their lives become organized around certain issues that carry the most importance to them. These could be the positions of “jock,” “alcoholic,” “popular,” ‘‘delinquent,’’ ‘‘incompetent,’’ or ‘‘dyslexic.” Once positioned, individuals are no longer engaged in self-making but rather are continually accepting, rejecting, or negotiating the identities being offered to them. Individuals develop positional identities over time, through social interaction, whereby they acquire "a sense of their relative social position" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 132) . Positional identities "happens through day-to-day encounters and is built, again and again, by means of artifacts, or indices of positioning, that newcomers [to a figured world] gradually learn to identify and then possibly to identify themselves with--either positively or negatively, through either acceptance or rejection (p. 133).” An exquisite example of this process is the intersection of the myriad positions available in adolescence with the figured world of school.

The opportunity for a multitude of positions gives the phenomenon of adolescence a unique shape and form as different aspects of complex young lives intersect. Adolescents learn to recognize each other as a particular sort of actor, sometimes with strong emotional attachments. Certain outcomes are valued over others, while recognition and significance are attributed to some acts and not others. Whether

adolescents are drawn into or recruited into them, they enter particular figured worlds based on who they are and their personal social history. They may be denied entry into some figured worlds based on their social rank or position, while simultaneously they may deny entry to a figured world to unqualified or unworthy outsiders (Holland et al., 1998).

Circulation of Power

We are all faced with the dilemma of figuring out into which worlds we will enter temporarily or peripherally and those we will enter with positions of power and prestige. For some individuals, positions are predetermined culturally and socially. This is especially true in the schools of the United States. Within the figured world of school, opportunities for movement from peripheral participation to expertise (Lave & Wenger, 1998) may be limited to the privileged, thus creating an environment of inequality. For example, school structures tend to ensure that white middle-class girls occupy positions of privilege while marginalizing working-class and poor girls and girls of color (Mendoza-Denton, 2008; Lopez, 2003). All figured worlds will contain "moments in which conflicts between lived participation and normative practices may emerge" (Linehan & McCarthy, 2001, p. 136). From a more negative stance, a "dark side" characterized by parochialism, conformity, exclusion, and coercion may also exist (Noddings, 1996, p. 258).

Thus, social contexts allow for the possibility that some individuals will occupy positions of greater or lesser value, influence, or activity in the interactions occurring there. Foucault (1978) concurs that power results through interactions and relationships in these communities. Those learners who remain on the periphery of the figured world may

abdicate opportunities for power. For example, the undiagnosed dyslexic girl's opportunity for sharing in the distribution of power may become complicated by the dearth of literacy tools she possesses to navigate her figured world of school. Conversely, as power circulates, those dyslexic learners who can pass as literate may assume personal and cultural liberation through the enactment of resistant practices.

Performativity

Identities arise from the particular local contexts that constitute individuals' lives and are shaped by the broader social and cultural discourses of our worlds. Although these discourses exert powerful influence over how persons enact their identities, poststructuralism provides an explanation of how they may also be resisted or contested. Butler (2006) argues that performativity, the effect of social discourses and cultural practices in producing persons, reveals the constructed nature of identity categories, such as gender, by virtue of the difference between one's actions and the discursive formations they perform. An identity, such as gender, "requires a performance that is repeated. This repetition is at once a reenactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings already socially established; and it is the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimation (p. 114)." In this way, identities become "natural." Butler also points out that gender norms and identities are socially instituted and maintained. They are the effects rather than the cause of discourses that constitute identity (Butler, 1990). For Butler, discourse is always constitutive and always performative in that/it has the power to produce what it names. Thus, Butler asserts that positions are constructed through discursive practices.

Voice

While some identities are often unconsciously reproduced, others are the result of a conscious practice of figuring the world. This can be accomplished through the expert use of cultural tools. Once aware of one's position, the individual may choose to remediate and in doing so, create other ways in which to be positioned. Bakhtin (1981) views this act as a manifestation of agency. The process of developing internally persuasive speech mediates conflicting voices so that the true Voice may be heard.

Bourdieu (1990), however, leaves little hope for the emergence of the true Voice. He uses the term *habitus* to describe the powerful system of structure and dispositions that are constituted in practice and based on past experience. It is through the *habitus* that the past tends to perpetuate itself into the future by reactivation in similarly structured practices. It gives a framework for understanding the social practices that are around us. Our *habitus* shapes our perceptions, interpretations and conceptions of the social practices around us. The fact that our *habitus* limits the way we see the world simultaneously limits the actions we deem possible or desirable.

Agency

Despite Bourdieu's assertions that our positions are coerced by societial pressures, there are cracks and openings that allow persons to take up positions as something other than those by which they are recognized in the social and cultural worlds they inhabit (Bettie, 2003). These cracks provide a space by which, in the ongoing interactions of their social and cultural lives, people can act in ways that position them differently. In other words, they provide a space for agency. Agency, then, can be defined as the socioculturally mediated capacity to act (Ahearn, 2001). In our figured worlds,

what then differentiates the actor from the agent? Karp (1986) suggests that actor and agent are two different aspects of the same person. The actor is rule governed as opposed to the agent who is engaged in the exercise of power in the sense of the ability to bring about change. Action theorists (Davidson, 1980; Seagal, 1991) argue that agency requires intention, presence of self, a rational point of view, and a domain of intentional control. Agency is typically evoked as a response to and challenge to the determination of social structuring.

Is it necessary for an individual to resist the discourses that tend to position them in particular ways in order to have agency? Feminist scholars (Davies, 1991) have emphasized the necessity to resist male dominance for agency to exist. From a feminist perspective of agency, a sixteen year old girl demonstrates her agency by choosing not to succumb to pressures to dress in gender normative ways, thereby taking up a position in opposition to prevailing discourses. As power circulates in the discourses which subsequently shape one's identity, it can also allow personal, cultural and professional liberation through these resistant practices (Foucault, 1978). This strategic making and remaking of identities exemplifies the act of performing agency. According to Holland et al. (1998), agency is intimately related to, and mediated by, identities or the possibilities of identities, which in turn, are shaped through activity in social practice. It is the principal way in which individuals come to "care about and care for what is going on around them" (p. 5).

Ironically, at the moment one attains the identity status of subject, one simultaneously experiences the moment of subjection. Once we are subjects, we are made subject to rules and disciplinary strategies that seek to control our bodies. When we sense

our self, we then become the focus of self monitoring practices consistent with the Panopticon (Foucault, 1978). This concern of subjection is reflected in Derrida's argument that we should best approach identity as a strategy through temporary utilization of the self rather than creating a deep commitment that might ultimately work to control us (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000). Butler (1994), too, asserts that accepting identities is tantamount to accepting dominant scripts and thus we focus on performing the identities that power has invented.

Identities are not located solely in the individual, but rather are negotiated in social interactions that take form in cultural spaces. Identities and self are concepts that extend beyond those constituted by the labels that people place on themselves and others. More importantly, identities result from the processes through which individuals come to understand themselves. Through these processes they come to ''figure'' out who they are in the ''worlds'' in which they participate.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

> I was a student in elementary school I wasn't a very good student. I had a terrible time with reading and math. As a matter of fact, I did not learn how to read until I was almost 14 years old. Can you imagine what it was like to see all my friends do so well in school and I wasn't! I thought I was dumb. I didn't like school because there was this boy that always teased me and made me feel even dumber. When I was fourteen, it was learned that I have a learning disability. It is called dyslexia. I felt trapped in a body that wouldn't do what everybody else could do. That was when one of my hero's, my teacher, found what was wrong with me and got me the help I needed to succeed in school. Of course, now that I am an adult, I realize that being learning disabled does not mean DUMB AT ALL! As a matter of fact, I have learned that being learning disabled only means that I cannot learn the way most of you do. As a matter of fact most learning disabled children are actually GENIUSES! Once I learned how to read and caught up with the rest of my fellow students, I did very well. (Polacco, retrieved 2010)

McMermott and Varne (1995) suggest that the fundamental and powerful assumptions of our culture regarding literacy are that it is inherently good for the individual, good for a culture, difficult to acquire, and should be transmitted to illiterates in classrooms. They assert that the consequences of the belief that literacy is difficult to acquire are the creation of a multitude of reasons that attempt to explain why some read better than others, as well as the development of reasons to degrade those without such powers. Thus, the more people believe that literacy is best learned in classrooms, the more they ignore other sources of literacy, and the more they insist on bringing back to school those who have already failed to develop school literacy.

A history of Learning Disabilities (LD) in the United States says much about American culture. After decades of neurological speculation on dyslexia, critics of the diagnosis of dyslexia still assert that it is nothing more than a plausible explanation of why children of privilege and intelligence could not learn to read as expected or a means

of securing more time for labeled children on examinations (McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 2006). The breakthrough of neuroimaging in children with dyslexia has revealed reduced engagement of the left temporo-parietal cortex for phonological processing of print, altered white-matter connectivity, and functional plasticity associated with effective intervention (Gabrieli, 2009). Gabrieli also reports that beh:avioral and brain measures identify infants and young children at risk for dyslexia, and preventive intervention is often effective. There is hope that a combination of targeted teaching practices and cognitive neuroscience measures could prevent dyslexia from occurring in the majority of children who would otherwise develop dyslexia. To fully explore this complex phenomenon as it is manifested in the lives of undiagnosed dyslexic adolescence in American middle and high schools, it is necessary to understand the complexity of dyslexia as well as the theoretical underpinnings of identity construction, adolescence, and "passing as literate."

Nature of Dyslexia

Throughout the world there is a lack of consensus regarding the exact nature of dyslexia. The Dyslexia Society of Singapore (2009) defines dyslexia as a specific difficulty in reading, writing, and spelling. It asserts that dyslexia is not caused by a lack of intelligence or a lack of opportunity to learn. The British Dyslexia Association (2009) asserts that dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty which is neurobiological in origin. It is described as a disability that persists across the lifespan of the individual. In addition, the individual's difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed and the automatic development of skills are unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities. Experts agree that dyslexia results in a pronounced

difficulty in the ability to read and write. Yet, a precise description of the beh:avioral manifestations of this reading disability does not exist. The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) resolves one aspect of the confusion by establishing a broad based definition of dyslexia. IDA defines dyslexia as follows:

> Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and / or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. (2009, p. 2)

The IDA definition is vague relative to the issue of the neurological origins of dyslexia. The definition minimizes the possibility that gender, race, class and instructional practices could contribute to or exacerbate the propensity for developing this condition. Firth (1999) states that in order to fully understand dyslexia we need to link together cultural, biological, and behavioral factors. He contends that we must consider the possibility that these three factors alone or in concert can aggravate or ameliorate the condition.

The recent work of Dr. Sally Shaywitz (2003) results in a new definition of dyslexia based on neuroimaging studies of dyslexics. Technological advances in the form of functional MRI's substantiate the view that dyslexia is a neuro-developmental disorder with a biological origin. Evidence also exists that supports the theory of a genetic component as a causative factor. Studies seek to isolate a specific causal gene (Nothen et al., 1999).

Dyslexia Misconceptions

Many misconceptions concerning the definition of dyslexia exist. In order to delve into the social construction and the biological origins of dyslexia, it is imperative that these misconceptions be replaced with accurate facts. The most common misconception concerning dyslexia is that it can be diagnosed when a student writes letters or words backwards (Shaywitz, 2003). Teachers and parents become overly concerned when they see evidence of these reversals in the writing samples of children. Badian (2005) reports that reversal errors are likely to disappear in children with reading disabilities as their reading and writing skills improve. The observation of reversals is not unique to the reading and writing of struggling readers. During the developmental process of acquiring literacy, most children engage in some level of word and letter reversals before the age of eight. Shaywitz (2003) asserts that there is no evidence that dyslexics actually see letters and words backwards. The core of dyslexia is not visual perception. The basis of dyslexia is a problem with processing language at the phoneme level. Kutz (1997) explains that phonemes are the representation of sounds that are meaningful within a language. These sounds allow individuals to distinguish one word from another. Thus, the deficiency in the dyslexic is the inability to distinguish the phonemic difference between /big/ and /pig/ rather than the ability to distinguish the graphic differences of the letters. Shaywitz (2003) expresses concern that many children will not be correctly diagnosed because they do not make the stereotypical reversals.

The assumption that dyslexia is the result of a visual processing deficit leads to a second common misconception. The use of colored text overlays or lenses is purported to be the quick fix for reading disabilities. Stone and Harris (1991) review evidence for the

existence of scotopic sensitivity syndrome (SSS). SSS allegedly is manifested as a *visual* disturbance related to light. Treatment for SSS includes the wearing of colored glasses or the use of colored plastic sheet overlays. Stone and Harris assert that the diagnosis of this condition is extremely subjective and raises questions of accuracy and reliability of previous studies.

Early studies indicate that dyslexia affects more boys than girls. Gaud and Carlson (1997) propose that the girls who are referred to clinics are those most severely affected. They trigger the referral process as a result of the "squeaking wheel" phenomenon by displaying co-occurring overt behavioral patterns of inattention. Szatmari's (1992) population studies found a ratio of identification of one girl for every three male diagnoses. Shaywitz (2003) gives evidence that as many girls are affected by dyslexia as are boys. She suggests that the reason that the over-identification of boys occurs is the manifestation of gender specific behavior. The occurrence of hyperactive and impulsive behavior by dyslexic boys is reported at a higher rate than that exhibited by dyslexic girls. The result is a disproportional referral rate. This argument presupposes a gender difference in the activity level of boys and girls. When girls display behaviors that mirror that of aggressive male behavior, it triggers the referral process and the subsequent diagnosis of a reading disability.

Views of Adolescence

> This story honors the teacher that took time to see a child that was drowning and needed help. I am a dyslexic, disnumeric and disgraphic. Can you imagine what it was like to try and learn along with other students when I needed specialized help...help that wasn't available in those days? I remember feeling dumb, that terrible feeling about myself was compounded by being teased by a bully. That boy changed my life and made me feel so unsafe and so sad that I didn't want to go to school anymore. Mr. Falker, my hero, my teacher, not only stopped this boy from

> teasing me, but he also noticed that I wasn't reading well and got a reading specialist to help. To this day, I remember the first day that words on a page had meaning to me...Mr. Falker had reached into the most lonely darkness and pulled me into bright sunlight and sat me on a shooting star. I shall never forget him...so this book was written both to honor Mr. Falker, but also to warn young people that mean words have a terrible power...and that they should do all that they can to see that teasing stops at their school.
>
> Thank you, Mr. Falker *(*Polacco, 1998*)*

Joftus and Maddox-Dolan (2003) report the alarming data that roughly 6 million secondary students read far below grade level and that approximately 3,000 students drop out of U.S. high schools every day. We can predict that a student who fails to read adequately in 1st grade has a 90% probability of reading poorly in 4th grade and a 75% probability of reading poorly in high school (Gabrieli, 2009). For many students, the secondary years provide a last chance to build sufficient reading skills (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Joftus, 2002). Slavin, Cheung, Groff, & Lake (2008) determined that there are few large, high-quality studies of middle and high school reading programs. Sadly, there were no methodologically adequate studies comparing different reading texts or curricula. After examining 33 studies that involved nearly 39,000 students, there were only a small number of studies of any particular program.

To understand the complexity of being an adolescent struggling reader, it is critical to first delve into the conundrum of adolescence. G. Stanley Hall *(*1904) is viewed as the father of the field of adolescence. He is responsible for describing adolescence as a period of development that is characterized with emotional “storm and stress” that is a universal and inevitable part of human development (Finders, 1998). Coleman (1961) takes a theoretical step away from Hall’s concept of storm and stress in adolescence and describes an independent adolescent culture that selects a focus on pop culture rather than education. He asserts that the nonchalance of teens relative to education goes beyond

hormonal changes. He argues that educators must embrace the challenge of apathy and change the norms of the culture to make education relative to the lives of youth.

Gardner and Steinberg (2005) engaged in quantitative research that reinforces the myths and moral panics (Becker, 1963; Wilkins,1964;Young, 1971) relative to adolescence. In their study, 306 individuals were divided into three age groups. The adolescent group included participants from 13 to 16 years old. The youth group included 18 to 22 year olds. The adult groups included participants 24 years old and older. Each group completed two questionnaires that assessed risk preference and risky decision making. Research questions sought to determine whether risk taking, risk preference, and risky decision making will decrease with age. They also queried as to whether individuals would demonstrate more risk taking, greater risk preference, and more risky decision making when in the company of their peers than when alone. The final question examined the difference in group effects on risk orientation among adolescents relative to the other groups. Participants in each age group were randomly assigned to complete the measures either alone or with two same-aged peers. The results indicated that risk taking and risky decision making decreased with age. The participants took more risks, focused more on the benefits than the costs of risky behavior, and made riskier decisions when in peer groups than alone. Peer effects on risk taking and risky decision making were stronger among adolescents and youths than adults. These findings support the idea that adolescents are more inclined toward risky behavior and risky decision making than are adults. In addition, peer influence seemed to play an important role in explaining risky behavior during adolescence

More recent research calls for educators of youth to consider how adolescence is socially situated. Vadaboncoeur (2005) argues that our perception of adolescents is created from the narratives society perpetuates with respect to youth in secondary schools. These narratives draw upon scripts that are used to objectify, refer to, and categorize young people. These narratives are performed in social contexts and thus exert influence among society's perception of adolescence. She argues that this narrative essentializes assumptions about youth that relegate them to marginalized positions

Patel Stevens (2005) calls for a new conception of adolescents and adolescence as identity markers that require a lens of schooling. By situating teenagers in the social context of schooling, it provides the opportunity to recreate the concept of adolescence from a hormone- riddled period of victimization to one that is process-focused and situated within and constructed by the educational setting. Through such a lens, the long-held notion of developmental stages is usurped by the understanding that individual identity is constructed as adolescents engage dialogically with their social and cultural contexts. This understanding of youth interacting with their social context reinforces the importance of examining the intersection of adolescence, schooling and gender.

Recent research argues that it is important for educators of youth to consider how adolescence is socially situated and criticizes theories that do not consider social, cultural and economic contexts of youth's lives (Lesko, 2001; Vadaboncoeur, 2005). Our concept of adolescence is based on the fictions that society has created with respect to youth in secondary schools. These fictions draw upon language that is used to objectify, refer to, and categorize young people. This language is created and applied in social contexts and exerts enormous social pressure. This language engenders specific assumptions about

youth that relegate them to marginalized positions by controlling their movements within society and limiting their access to information (Vadaboncoeur, 2005).

Adolescence marks a distinct and pivotal place in students' understanding of themselves as males, females, students, and future workers and citizens. The struggle with oral and written interpretations of texts can give us insight into how literacy mediates students' understanding of themselves, their place in society, and their future. As we seek to make decisions regarding the academic well-being of the adolescents in our charge, it is critical that we debunk the popular assumptions associated with phenomenon of adolescence. As educators we must accept the theoretical stance that adolescence is socially constructed and reject the views of teenagers that we have inherited from the Victorians (Lesko, 1994).

The Construction of Gendered Literacy Identities

> In first grade, Trisha sat in a circle with the other kids. They were all holding Our Neighborhood, their first reader, sounding out letters and words. They said, "Beh:, beh:…oy, boy, and luh, luh…ook, look." The teacher smiled at them when they put all the sounds together and got a word right. But when Trisha looked at a page, all she saw were wiggling shapes, and when she tried to sound out words, the other kids laughed at her. "Trisha, what are you looking at in that book?" they'd say. "I'm reading!" she'd say back to them. But her teacher would move on to the next person. Always when it was her turn to read, her teacher had to help her with every single word. And while the other kids moved up into the second reader and third reader, she stayed alone in Our Neighborhood. Trisha began to feel "different." She began to feel dumb. (Polacco, 1998, p. 22)

Children with reading difficulties often choose pastimes and school subjects which do not involve large amounts of reading. They are likely to encounter print less often than an average child on a day-to-day basis, perhaps leading to a Matthew effect (Stanovich, 1986) and a negative cycle of achievement. Spear-Swerling and Sternberg (1996) assert that "children who start off poorly in reading rapidly become even more

disadvantaged relative to other readers, whereas the reverse happens for children who have a successful start in reading" (p. 9).

Thus, we expect young people with poor literacy to show evidence of self-selecting environments with less print exposure. It is critical to explore how this avoidance of print affects the literacy identities of struggling readers. Equally important is the examination of how gender intersects with literacy identity work in which students engage as they struggle to read, write, interpret, and create texts in their classrooms.

The processes of written and oral production and interpretation of texts in classroom settings provide students with opportunities to create relationships with other classmates (Sperling, 1995) and negotiate their sense of themselves as gendered, raced and classed beings (Dyson, 1995; Finders, 1997). Through these identity negotiations they articulate their life goals and interests (Hull & Schultz, 2001), as well as stake out allegiances within larger social groups or discourse communities (Gee, 1996).

At an early age, children are exposed to the culturally imposed positions of gender. Societal expectations have been shown to use literacy to make sense of the versions of masculinity and femininity they see in their lives and to imagine themselves as actors in them (Orellana, 1995). This process involves positioning themselves into different gendered societal categories and trying on different gendered practices and identities. Both boys and girls manipulate these positions so that they serve their own interests and allow for exploration of various gendered practices and their effects (Connell, 1987).

Feminist Perspective

The feminist perspective of a gendered literacy identity inserts power as an integral component of this process. Feminist see language as central to human experience and understanding of the world but they see it primarily as a veh:icle for the exertion of power (Weedon, 1987). Students come to understand characters' motivations and actions through socially prescribed views of what males and females should and can do (Davies, 1993). This often creates a hierarchy of power in which femininities are dominated by masculinities.

This domination of masculinities results in girls being positioned in specific ways that may limit their access to the full array of educational experiences (Sadker & Sadker, 1994; Orenstein, 1994; Pipher, 1994). Teachers often encourage girls to take on positional identities that emphasize nurturing, such as mother or teacher, and although these positions may provide girls with increased power in some classroom relations, they also deny girls access to other roles. This role restriction results in inequality in the ability to switch between registers as the linguistic context changes (Finders, 1997).

Whom Should We Blame?

The well intentioned second wave of feminist researchers shares some of the blame for these inequitable patterns. Carol Gilligan (1982) falls into an essentialist trap by creating a stage theory of moral development exclusively for women. Rather than departing from the limitation of developmental stage construct to explain human development and behavior, she just develops her own female friendly version. Just like Kohlberg (1981), Gilligan's model identifies major stages of moral development.

Female children begin with a selfish focus. As they develop they learn to care for others and reject selfishness. In the conventional stage, women doubt their freedom to act in their own interests. They value the interests of others above their own. In the post-conventional stage, women finally learn that their own interests are just as important as others. The core theoretical difference in the feminist model exists in Gilligan's assertion that the transitions between the stages are caused by changes in the sense of self rather than in changes in cognitive capability. Kohlberg's approach is based on Piaget's cognitive developmental model while Gilligan's is based on selective aspects of Freud.

Gilligan's stages of moral development were constructed from the study of women making significant decisions in their lives. This investigation was driven in reaction to Kohlberg's experimental results that insinuated that women tended to be less morally developed than men. Central to Gilligan's investigation was the exploration of the moral decision making process in which women engaged as they decided whether or not to get an abortion. The issue of reproductive rights is the linchpin in Gilligan's paradigm. It is the emergence of choice that gives rise to the emergence of feminist moral voice. Gilligan concludes that women's sense of integrity appears to be entwined with an ethic of care rather than the ethic of justice. Morally developed women think more about caring, for themselves and others, rather than following the rules. Gilligan's attempt to underscore the importance of investigating girls in the realm of moral development resulted in the reinforcement the essentialist doctrine of second wave feminism and provided fodder for the emerging third wave (hooks, 2000).

hooks (2000) asserts that competitive, atomistic liberal individualism has undermined the potential radicalism of feminist struggles. Instead, she maintains that the

monopoly of feminist discourse by bourgeois women has thwarted the focus away from true feminist issues. She goes on to theorize, as a result of her personal experiences, that all white feminists seek to silence black women in order to maintain the white hold on feminism. Thus, hook's central argument is definitional. Is feminism a radical movement working for the eradication of domination and elitism in all human relations or is it a movement that strives for social equality with men? The obvious answer is both but separatism and radicalism refuse a collaborative definition.

An obvious example of this gendered inequality is that of the silencing of culturally responsive talk in schools. This practice has had its most deleterious effects on girls and students of color (Mendoza-Denton, 2008; Lopez, 2003). Racially stigmatized youth are labelled as "at-risk" thus sentencing them to low expectations and low-level curriculum tracks (Lopez, p. 167). Thelma, a 21-year-old West Indian woman, reports the outcome of her vocational track classes.

> In secretarial studies, they teach you shorthand and how to take notes. It was kind of easy to take notes because I took a lot of notes in shorthand. My teacher taught grammar and the use of punctuation. It was integrated in secretarial studies and you had to know it.You lose points for putting a comma in the wrong place. It was amazing to me. Although I didn't know what a research paper was, I knew where to place my commas! So, it was hard for me to be in college. In high school we didn't have any research paper or anything like that. They didn't challenge us at all. (Lopez, p. 57)

Women were taught to beh:ave like young ladies. This translated into being silent and obedient. Teachers were less threatened by young women and thus gave them more leniency if rules were transgressed.

By comparison, boys were relegated into special education classes for misbehavior. When ostracized to a low level curriculum, many expressed their resentment through refusal to make good grades. Mr. Pena, a security guard at Urban

High School, reported that young women were only involved in frivolous spats over jealousies, unlike the male students, who were involved with more serious fights over property (Lopez, 2003, p. 74).

As a result of gender, social or economic variability, some children have limited exposure to the special linguistic patterns of text. This unique linguistic precursor to reading acquisition is that of cohesion. Cox, Fang and Otto (2004) define cohesion as the interrelatedness and interpretability of words and sentences in a text. Cohesion determines the child's ability to differentiate different types of texts. As children experience language in different contexts, a specific linguistic register develops. A register can be defined as a conventional language pattern that corresponds to specific situation. The ultimate expression of cohesion is the ability to switch between registers as the linguistic context changes. It is not surprising that Cox, Fang and Otto (2004) observed variability in the knowledge of differing linguistic registers relative to socioeconomic status. Without this opportunity to develop a text register and the ability to switch between linguistic registers, children come to school with an immediate disadvantage.

Thus, an even closer look must be taken at the philosophical and academic profiles of the teachers with whom we entrust the academic and social growth of our girls. Levine (2006) in his description of future elementary education teachers as "less academically qualified than our children need or deserve" (p.56) epitomizes this critical perspective. In response to this criticism, the American Educational Research Association (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005) has called for more research in the area of teacher education.

Once the Damage is Done: Spoiled Identity and "Passing as Literate"

> Trisha was sure Mr. Falker believed that she could read. She had learned to memorize what the kid sitting next to her was reading. Or she would wait for Mr. Falker to help her with a sentence, then she would say the same thing he did. "Good," he would say. Then one day, Mr. Falker asked her to stay after school and help wash the blackboards. He put on the music and brought out little sandwiches as they worked and talked. All at once he said, "Let's play a game! I'll shout out letters. You can write them on the board with the wet sponge as quickly as you can.""A," he shouted. She wiped a watery A. "Eight," he shouted. She made a watery 8. "Fourteen . . . Three . . . D . . . M . . . Q," he shouted out. He shouted out many, many letters and numbers. Then he walked up beh:ind her and together they looked at the board. It was a watery mess. Trisha knew that none of the letters or numbers looked like they should. She threw the sponge down and tried to run. *(*Polacco, 1998, p. 27)

Kroeger (2003) defines passing as the act of creating, imposing, adopting, or rejecting a given identity and the way society rewards and penalizes people when they do. This negotiation involves complex subterfuge that involves keeping secrets, avoiding disclosures, and the enlisting of the complicity of those who know the secrets.

Research that examines the strategies used by dyslexic adolescents to pass as literate is limited. To be able to study this process of passing, studies involving English Language Learners (ELL's) are the only source available to give a glimpse of this complex dance. Early studies on passing and the concealment of illiteracy include that of Ramos (1973) who discussed the interactional strategies that low-income Mexican American families use to conceal illiteracy from outsiders. Strategies for dealing with problematic literacy situations included calling upon the services of benefactors for tasks that required reading and writing. If no benefactor was available other strategies were employed to conceal illiteracy. A family faced with formal documents attempted to pass as literate by looking at the document for several minutes as if they were examining it carefully. They would then pass it on as if it had been read, and signing it as if it had been

read and approved. This performance was enacted to conceal the inability to read. Rueda and Meh:an (1986) describe a paradox in the passing strategies of students with learning disabilities. They avoid difficult tasks while trying to appear competent. This requires constant checking, monitoring, and evaluation their actions. This review of the case histories of students with learning disabilities concluded (1) that passing and metacognition are examples of strategic interaction in that they because they both involve planning and awareness of action directed toward the accomplishment of a goal, and (2) that passing is a context-bound activity that occurs on some but not all occasions of interaction.

The later study of Monzo and Rueda (2009) examine these concepts of stigma and passing as they describe how English Language Learners cope with the stigma associated with lack of English proficiency in our society. This article describes the concept of passing for English fluent among Latino immigrant children. Passing refers to the use of strategies to appear more competent in English than is actually the case. The findings suggest that passing for English fluent may be both a strategy of self preservation and a form of resistance.

English holds greater power and status in the United States than minority languages, particularly Spanish (Monzo & Rueda, 2009). This sometimes becomes evident to immigrant families almost immediately upon arrival to the United States. Many Spanish-dominant children and adults often experience discrimination or prejudice because of their language and ethnicity. Children are conscious of being “different” and feel pressure to “fit in”.

Monzo and Rueda (2009) seek to dissect the complexities of “passing” for English fluent speakers in a variety of contexts. Specific research questions include (a) why students attempt to “pass” as English fluent, (b) how the practice of “passing” reflects race relations, and (c) how “passing” relates to children’s developing identities and agency.

Children’s “passing” strategies may both reflect and support gender, race and identity development and agency. This framework allows for the dynamic and complex reality of both social and individual worlds that so often lead to “improvisations” (Holland et al., 1998). Thus, the authors present Latino children as creative and resourceful human beings who actively mediate their own psychological functions and their English-speaking world.

Leigh (2006) asserts that struggling readers avoid texts or respond helplessly to assigned tasks. In addition, content area teachers ignore the reading needs of these struggling readers. The ways in which each student transacted with the reading task demands of his or her classroom were influenced by several variables. Most significant influences were the participants’ perception of his or her abilities as a reader, the participants’ desired persona as a reader, and the participants’ desire to compreh:end and learn from text. Students explained that they tried to find other ways to compreh:end and learn from text. Participants’ reported that some of the beh:aviors their teachers expected them to engage in could reveal their weaknesses as readers to other students. Fear of disclosure created the need to attempt to compreh:end through other means. Alternative strategies included (a) listening to discussions about text, (b) asking friends for assistance, and (c) watching how others gained information.

Equally interesting were the ways in which each teacher transacted with his or her respective student. There was variability in relation to the reading task. Teacher demands on students were influenced by perception of the student's cognitive strengths and weaknesses as a reader and perceived level of student motivation. Teachers expressed frustration when a student did not engage in beh:aviors that would help him or her compreh:end text. It is telling that the teachers never asked students to discuss their refusal to comply with suggested compreh:ension strategies and simply made the assumption that their failure to follow directions was symptomatic of laziness (Leigh, 2006).

Conclusion

It is essential to understand that domination and elitism are alive and well in the middle and high schools of the United States to fully understand how the literacy identities in adolescent girls are constructed. Griffith (1995) asserts that feminism is not just theoretically significant in today's classrooms but that educational practices and educational outcomes are damaged by sexism. The prevailing sexism both in and out of formal educational institutions distorts how such educational practices and outcomes are understood and researched. This is precisely the concern of feminist epistemology: how to improve knowledge and remove sexist distortions.

The majority of teachers in today's work force are white, female and middle class. Teachers of color comprise about 16 percent of the teaching force in the United States (Banks, et al, 2005). In addition, pre-service as well as in-service teachers have little experience with children with learning differences or from cultures and languages different from their own. Our call as researchers is to determine the particular attributes,

skills, and dispositions that are needed to increase the probability that pre-service and in-service teachers will be able to deliver a culturally responsive and academically appropriate pedagogy.

Today, with the advent of Response to Intervention (RTI), all teachers are mandated with the task of meeting the educational needs of all the children. As struggling readers are identified, gender disparities are well documented. Between three and four times as many boys as girls have been reported as being dyslexic based on assumed gender normative behavioral differences in which boys with dyslexia tend to express their frustration by acting up and causing trouble while dyslexic girls tend to internalize their feelings and withdraw. Logic follows that parents and schools are far more likely to seek help for a disruptive child than a quiet one (Gardner, 2008).

General educators are understandably uncertain regarding their level of preparation for their new role of delivering special education pedagogy. There are few studies focused on the task of preparing teachers to fulfill this multifaceted role. New research must focus on how well we are preparing teacher candidates with the theoretical understandings and pedagogical skills necessary to meet different learning needs and styles of our adolescent girls. In addition, we must also determine whether teacher education programs are preparing graduates who internalize and embrace the importance of debunking gender stereotypes.

The first step of this research agenda is to fully understand the complexity of dyslexia as well as the theoretical underpinnings of identity construction, adolescence and "passing as literate." Informed by poststructural thought, this study will examine how participants perceived their worlds and how they negotiated peers, assets, limitations and

behaviors. As they reveal their positions in their figured worlds through interviews and observations, analysis of data will search for issues of power, identity and agency around which their lives become organized.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

> "Cheshire-Puss . . . Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"
> "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the cat.
> Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

Why Case Study?

The Cheshire Cat counsels Alice that she must know where she is going in order to reach her final destination. As a qualitative researcher, the journey of inquiry is just as important as the final destination (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin,1989). This chapter provides an overview of the epistemological assumptions that underpin the journey of case study as a methodology, the resulting research methods, and an examination of ethical considerations.

Case Study as Methodology

The epistemological perspective for this qualitative case study assumes that reality is constructed as a result of the dialectic relationship between micropractices of everyday life and the macroprocesses of structures, systems, and institutions (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007). The case study methodology is selected because it provides the opportunity to focus on and explore the ways in which undiagnosed dyslexic girls made sense of their worlds in these multiple contexts. In the most general terms, case study methodology is both descriptive and non-experimental. It is a study of a bounded system in which the boundaries of what is included or excluded are clearly defined. The participants for this study are adult dyslexic females who negotiated adolescence and the concomitant schooling without a definitive diagnosis of dyslexia until later in life. In addition, as Merriam (1998) suggests, this case is particularistic in that it focuses on the

particular phenomenon of undiagnosed dyslexic adolescents. This case study produces an end product that is thick, rich, and comprehensive. Finally, this case study is heuristic. It provides new insight on the negotiation of identities by undiagnosed dyslexic adolescent girls by examining concrete examples of a phenomenon.

The use of case study methodology is especially appropriate when prior theoretical propositions guide data collection and analysis and the researcher wishes to account for and describe contextual conditions. Current theories of adolescence are well established and call for researchers to consider how adolescence is socially situated (Vadaboncoeur, 2005; Patel Stevens, 2005). Recent research argues that it is important for researchers to consider how adolescence is socially situated and criticizes theories that do not consider social, cultural and economic contexts of youth's lives (Lesko, 2001; Vadaboncoeur, 2005).

Equally established is a strong theoretical framework for the construction of a gendered literacy identity. Holland et al., (1998) explain that the contextually bound nature of identities and positionality are defined as the places or perspectives from which individuals shape their actions. Individuals negotiate a myriad of possible positions and they assume figured identities. These figured identities are constructed from societal, personal, and singular contextual positions.

Case Study Methods

Once case study methodology is selected, a specific method must be determined. Stake (2000) identifies three methods of case studies. The first, intrinsic case study, provides information and understanding of a case, not because it contributes to model building, but because the case itself is interesting. The second, instrumental case study

provides insight into an issue. In instrumental studies, the case acts as a background or supporting information for understanding or explaining a larger issue or concept. Finally, collective case study involves more than one case. This case study can be identified as an instrumental case in that it is bounded by the single case of undiagnosed dyslexic girls and their negotiations of their identities. Yin (1994) suggests single-case research is appropriate when testing a theory, for an extreme or unique case, or for a revelatory case (analyzing a previously unseen phenomenon). The journey of three dyslexic adolescents exemplifies the category of an extreme or unique case.

Selection of Participants

General standards of quality for case study research methods require the presence of the following: multiple sources of evidence, a clear chain of evidence describing the researcher's path from data to analysis, and a review of the study by the key informant(s) so that they may clear up any misconceptions in the data (Yin 1994). Additionally, sufficient time in the field and careful consideration of ethical concerns lend credibility to the research.

A purposive sampling technique was selected because of the need to identify thick descriptors in a particular population. Sample parameters include currently diagnosed dyslexic females who negotiated adolescence and the concomitant schooling without a definitive diagnosis of dyslexia. Three informants meeting the sample criteria were recruited through a volunteer email to the members of the International Dyslexia Association and a dyslexia listserv. Four responses were received.

The researcher contacted the selected volunteers by telephone to ensure that they fulfilled the purposive sample criteria and to explain the purpose of the study. The

potential informants were told that they would be asked to take part in three one-hour interviews in which they would be asked to discuss issues related to academic, career, and personal history. In addition, three observations, with additional time set aside for member checking, would be required. All four volunteers aligned with requirements of the purposeful sampling descriptors in that each participant is a currently diagnosed dyslexic female who negotiated adolescence and the concomitant schooling without a definitive diagnosis of dyslexia.

The researcher established initial rapport by assuring the potential informants that the information they shared would be kept confidential. Each participant was told that she would have the option to refrain from participating in any part of the research process. They were also informed of their option to leave the study in its entirety. One of the four participants opted out of the study due to the grave illness and ultimate death of her father. The decision was made to continue the study with three participants.

Participants and Research Setting

Before introducing the participants, I want to explain the genesis of each pseudonym. The pseudonyms for the participants were not randomly assigned but were selected purposely to reflect the aspect of each individual that projected their greatest strength, voice and agency as they dealt with the challenges of dyslexia.

Lucy

"Lucy is not a beautiful woman, but people seldom realized it when captured by her charms." These are the words Lucy requested that I use as her introduction. My first interview with Lucy, and all of our subsequent interviews, took place at an unlikely confessional, a cabana table with umbrella. This holy nook pressed close to the painted

brick wall of a premier design center for residential furnishings. I sat for a long time waiting anxiously, thinking Lucy had had second thoughts. But in a flourish, Lucy walked out of the adjacent door, looked at me, lit the first of at least twenty cigarettes, and said, “I guess you’re my date.” It quickly became obvious that Lucy felt comfortable behind the screen. When asked questions about family, school and other things in her life, I had a keen sense that I was to keep a safe distance.

I began the interview with a review of informed consent, explaining that I would read it to her or that she could have a trusted other read it to her. Lucy’s finger ran down the page stopping with significance along the way and then announced, “I guess you’re not going to kill me so let’s get started.” After hitting the record button on the tape-recorder, Lucy began her story with her first memories of struggling to read.

Lucy self-identified as a dyslexic and alcoholic. She is tall, thin, 62, and wears her red hair cut close to her head. Her leathered skin, smoker’s mouth, and constant furtive glances reveal her roughhewn lifestyle. Gesturing to the door from which she had just emerged, Lucy explained that this was *the* essential source for interior designers. The building encompassed 550,000 square feet, and included 80 showrooms that offered a comprehensive collection of the industry’s finest product lines including furniture, fabric, kitchen, bath, fine art, antiques, lighting, and accessories. Lucy proudly explained that the facility was only open to design trade professionals and a photo identification card was issued and must be worn by all visitors. But Lucy is a rule breaker, and with a wink explained that we were going in the back door.

Inside these hallowed walls was where my observations took place. I was positioned in an unobtrusive corner so as not to interfere with the high end transactions

that were occurring between Lucy and her well-heeled and well known customers. Lucy had memorized every item by stock number, color option and catalogue page. I observed no reading or writing tasks occurring within my visual range. I assumed the actual order was finalized in a back room by one individual designated for this purpose.

The Cellist

The Cellist sparkled with forced cheerfulness for our first interview. She avoided telling me her exact age, but I gleaned from her story that she was in her mid to late forties. She had a boyish appearance with her white blonde hair cut as if a bowl had been carefully placed on her head before the scissors did their work. Her face was shiny clean without a hint of makeup. She seemed prepared for the disclosures that were to come.

The Cellist began our interview behind the metaphorical screen and was visibly nervous. The Cellist's home provided the perfect setting for three intimate interviews. She surrounded herself with gifts from children artfully displayed on the walls of her 70 year old house. There were treasures from travel and artifacts from parents long since dead juxtaposed in an odd symmetry. A suitcase was open and partially filled in anticipation of a trip to visit her brother and his family. As she served tea, The Cellist began her story of courage and determination.

The Cellist explained that she has spent the last 21 years at one of the oldest therapeutic, educational centers for children and adults with hearing, speech, language or learning disabilities. One might think that it was serendipitous that The Cellist arrived at this particular facility. Precipitated by dissatisfaction with her job, she took immediate action when a co-worker mentioned that there was an opening for a music teacher at a nearby therapeutic facility. It was at this facility that all three observations occurred

The Prom Queen

The interviews with The Prom Queen were in a clinical setting. She was an unwilling penitent. As she walked into my office, I was dazzled by her beauty that was partially hidden by the veil of hard living and disappointment. At 29, she had golden tresses, blue eyes, porcelain skin, perfect white smile, and a voluptuous body. Her entrance was reserved and self-conscious. Her eyes darted around the waiting room and I observed physical release as she saw no one else was there. I escorted her into my office and assured her that no one would be in the office until five that afternoon. That would give us two uninterrupted hours for our first interview. Comforted by this anonymity, we decided that the subsequent two interviews would take place here as well. Each interview occurred after regular office hours.

She explained that she had been going through a difficult time and had just moved back into her parents' home. This hard time included the lifestyle of a bartender and accompanying issues with alcohol and depression. Parental concern had prompted the recent psycho-educational evaluation and the subsequent diagnosis of dyslexia. The Prom Queen had many questions about my research and was thrilled to find that it focused on adult women who were diagnosed late in life just as she had been. I explained the formalities of consent and offered to read the form to her or to let her take it home for a trusted other to read to her. She opted to give the form a cursory glance before signing and as she did, I summarized each section briefly to maintain her pride and to ensure that she understood the particulars of the project and her rights as a participant.

The Prom Queen remained nervous throughout our initial meeting. When asked about her memories of school, she shrugged, looked down and reported having few

memories. Then her head popped up. “Well, in second grade I do remember, you know, the spelling bee, getting up in front of the class and the teacher was horrible because I misspelled tomato.” When I asked for clarification she said, “Well, all the kids laughed because SHE WAS LAUGHING.” I confirmed, “She laughed at you?” She confirmed the response. I asked her how she responded. She retorted, “Like I always do, I shut down, don’t talk. It was terrifying.” The dam was irreparably broken and her story spewed forth.

The observations of The Prom Queen were both formal and informal. The formal observation occurred at the restaurant where she was currently working as a waitress and bartender. I sat in the back booth and observed as she memorized the daily menu then moved quickly to charm her customers in hopes of higher tips. The Prom Queen took no orders on her waitress pad , but instead memorized each to perfection and repeated them to the cook in the kitchen. Informal observations took place in The prom Queen’s bedroom, were we spent many hours talking and reviewing old yearbook.

Interview Protocol

Once informed consent was acquired, the first one-hour interview ensued. Hayes (2004) regards interviews as a rich source of data. Interviews were digitally recorded and recordings were transcribed verbatim. The interview began informally by asking the participant what it had been like as a child to be dyslexic. I allowed as much time as necessary for the participant to respond. Additional prompts were selected from those provided in Appendix A based on the interview direction determined by the answer to the initial question. The prompts in Appendix A are open-ended and were constructed as a direct result of information gathered from a review of the literature related to the constructs of adolescence, dyslexia, and identity.

The second one-hour interview occurred within three weeks of the first. Prior to the second interview, an observation of the participants had taken place. The observation culminated in the sharing of the transcription of the first interview. This member checking experience was very intimate. I read the transcript to the participant and made notes and changes on the copy. I did not have the recorder running during this time but reflections on this interaction were added to my researcher's journal. The participant was constantly asked if she had any additions, deletions or changes to the transcription. I shared my notes from my observation and asked for explanations or insights as to what I had observed. These participant insights were immediately added to my notes and ultimately added to my journal.

The format for the third interview was also preceded by an observation and member checking session. During the final interaction with participants the researcher spent an afternoon reviewing a complete copy of the third interview transcription. The transcription was read to participants. Each was asked for any corrections, changes, or deletions. Reaction and reflections to member checking were added to my researcher journal. In addition, a summary of observation data from the third interview was brought to participants for final member checking. The participant was given the opportunity to clarify or add to the data. Member checking provided credibility and validity to the data by giving participants an opportunity to correct errors and challenge what were perceived as wrong interpretations (see Table 1).

Table 1

Overview of Data Collection and Data Analysis

Dates	Activities
March 2010	Obtain IRB Approval Invite Participants to participate in the study; Set up initial electronic data collection files Conduct initial interview Conduct initial observation Record field notes Listen to interviews and brainstorm and record thoughts and possible themes in researcher's journal Transcribe interviews
April 2010	Conduct second interview Conduct second observation Read first transcript to participants for member checking Record field notes
May 2010	Third Interview Third Observation A complete copy of the second interview transcriptions and a summary of observation data will be read to participants for the purpose of member checking. The participant may clarify or add to the data. Code field notes with established codes Transcribe Interview
June 2010	Complete any needed data collection Continue Data Analysis Final transcript and field notes to participants for member checking
July 2010	Continue Data Analysis Draft Results Chapter Meet with advisor for input and revision Revise Chapter 4 Chapter 4 Revisions to Advisor and member checking
August2010	Meet with advisor for input and revisions for Chapter 4 Write Chapter 5 Chapter 5 to Advisor Meet with Advisor for input and revisions Revisions to Chapter 5
September 2010	Dissertation to Committee
October 2010	Defend Dissertation

Researcher Responsibility

As a career educator, I have faced the many and varied demands that are required of my profession. With this personal experiential framework, I stepped into the role of solo investigator. I constructed and implemented the interview protocol and conducted all observations. I bear sole responsibility for observation notes, daily diary reflections, and verbatim transcription of all interviews. In addition, I am responsible for data analysis and establishment of research themes. Another aspect of my role as researcher has been to maintain a trusting relationship with the informants by sharing transcription and observational data and incorporating informant feedback.

Trustworthiness

During the process of gathering and analyzing qualitative data, it is important to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. In order to achieve trustworthiness, triangulation of data was employed. Lincoln and Guba (1985) define triangulation as a strategy for looking at an educational problem from a number of perspectives, and using these alternate perspectives to check the accuracy of others. Triangulation involves multiple methods of data collection strategies and data sources. For this study, triangulation of data was established through the use of data derived from interviews, observations and field notes. The findings revealed in this study were based on multiple data sources and the themes that they produced. Triangulation occurred when data articulated during interviews also became evident in documents, and researcher reflections from observations.

Prolonged engagement is a second requirement for a trustworthy study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest spending a long enough period in ‘the field’ where the research

is being conducted helps to improve the credibility of the research by fostering the development of trust between researchers and participants, reducing the distortions introduced by the presence of the researcher, and allowing the researcher to engage more fully in the culture of the research context. Three, one-hour interviews occurred over a 3-month period. The interviews addressed specific research questions and were conducted by the researcher in a context convenient to the participants. The interviews were recorded by a digital recorder and recordings were transcribed verbatim. In addition, three observations were coordinated with member checking sessions. A final interaction occurred in which a complete copy of the third interview transcriptions and a summary of observation data were reviewed. As I read the transcripts to the participants, I gave time for clarifications, additions and deletions. The personal nature of this member checking of each transcription significantly prolonged the engagement with the participant and provided credibility and validity to the data by giving participants an opportunity to correct errors and challenge what were perceived as wrong interpretations without embarrassment. Table 2 shows a quantification of my contacts with my data sources.

Table 2

Data Sources

Data Source	Documents per Participant	Total No. Data Sources
Semistructured Interviews	3	9
Observations	3	9
Member Checks	3	9
Journal Entries/Field Notes	10	30

Data Analysis

Field Log and Journal

After my initial meeting with my participants, I started keeping a researcher's journal in a word file in my computer. I wrote about my ideas, impressions, concerns, questions, and subjectivities. The entries contained random "think pieces" about possible and ongoing interpretations of my observations from the field. I also reflected on my subjectivities and biases, noting what or whom I was seeing or not seeing, asking or not asking, and doing or not doing. Much of my reflection included a critique of my questioning technique and my tendency to ask yes or no questions rather than to adhere to my commitment to open ended questions. This was the storehouse for reflections on untapped encounters with participants including member checking sessions, phone calls or emails. The field log was a table of dates, times, appointments, phone calls, emails and brief descriptions of all my past, present and future activities in the field.

Constant Comparison

Through the use of constant comparison of data, each passage of text was coded and then compared with all those passages already coded. Glaser and Strauss (cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 339) described the constant comparison method as following four distinct stages:

1. comparing incidents applicable to each category,
2. integrating categories and their properties,
3. delimiting the theory, and
4. writing the theory. (p. 339)

I began the constant comparison by numbering each line of transcription, journal, and field notes. The numbered documents were placed in a two column tabular format. One column cell contained one numbered data item while the adjacent column cell provided

open space for coding and notes. Each document was labeled by source and date and was printed in a different color ink.

The first stage of the constant comparison technique was the process of comparing incidents applicable to each category. Before this could happen, I needed to establish the categories. This was done by studying the data, reading and rereading transcriptions, dreaming about observations and discussing unprotected information with trusted others. It has been stated that the categories will emerge as the coding proceeds (Lincoln & Guba, 1984, p. 340). The emergence looked much more like giving birth, replete with labor and delivery. Striking a balance between pushing and not pushing took much self control.

With sweat still on my brow, a pattern or trend that could be seen after some amount of data were digested received a tentative code. What appeared to be a similar incident today might not the next week. This painful process was done and preliminary categories were defined. This served as a starting point to initiate the coding process. Thus, the first iteration of categories and subcategories was created and codified (see Table 3).

The “constant” in constant comparison implies that as the process evolves, the researcher continually compares incidents and categories with other incidents and categories of the same and other groups (Lincoln & Guba, 1984, p. 341). The recursive nature of this process required rumination of initial categories, participants, data sources, informal analysis, and intuition. Through this process, the initial coding was completed, revisited, and re-evaluated to ensure validity.

Table 3

Overview of Codes and Subcodes

Code	Subcode
Negotiating the Figured World of School (NFW)	Negotiating Text (NT) Negotiating Family (NF) Negotiating Stigma (NS) Negotiating Peers (NP)
Passing as Literate (PL)	Hiding (HP) Deceiving (DP) Utilizing Learning Strengths (ULSP)

The second stage of the constant comparison technique involved integrating categories and their properties. The movement from stage one to stage two was a fluid process. With defined categories and subcategories, the volume of data being constantly compared was large. Coding now was a judgment of where incidents fit, while categories and subcategories were scrutinized. At this point a coding document was developed as an instrument which allowed for the grouping of responses and observations. Three official iterations of the coding process occurred, bur far more informal iterations occurred subliminally.

The third stage of the constant comparison technique was the process of delimiting the theory. Lincoln and Guba (1984, p. 343) asserted that delimiting begins to occur at the level of theory construction. Delimiting was an evolutionary step in the development of my analysis. This process proceeded organically as analysis and narrative were co-constructed. The outcome of this process can be seen in the following chapter.

Reflexivity

The subjective nature of qualitative research and the coding process makes it incumbent on the researcher to expose any preexisting biases or assumptions that might influence this process. Reflexivity refers to the process by which the researcher refers back to prior understandings and biases related to the subjects and settings of their observations. Fine (2000) suggests that when we opt to engage in the social struggle with those who have been exploited and subjugated, we work the hyphen revealing far more about ourselves and far more about the structures of the other. It becomes incumbent on the researcher to ask how their research projects are situated within the context of their identities. Equally important is to query how the researcher's identities in relation to the identities of the participants.

With this self awareness, we may seek to understand any kind of event by knowing that understanding is constructed by the interaction of our observations and our prior knowledge. It is essential that researchers consider the effect of their personal subjectivities on their work. It is the researcher's responsibility to explain who she is and her position as researcher. Once known biases are aired, the reader can question the position of the researcher as it relates to the context of research, the subjects, and the ultimate answers to the research questions. Mendoza-Denton (2008) asserts that researchers have grappled with the inherently perspectival framing of philosophical and political standpoints, and the impossibility of objectivity. If objectivity is indeed impossible, then the task of the researcher is to unmask to the extent possible the preexisting assumptions, motivations, narratives, and relationships which are hidden in the researcher's proverbial closet.

In order to reflect on the way that my subjectivities will influence this study, it is important to analyze present and past experiences and roles that have shaped my world perspective and thus influence my critical perspective. Growing up in Atlanta in the fifties, I experienced an overdose of *Donna Reed, Leave it to Beaver* and *I Love Lucy.* I remember the excitement of the first color television. My parents discussed the influence of the Great Depression on their lives. Consequently, I was raised with a strong work ethic and an appreciation for thrift. In the midst of this simplicity was the turmoil and hatred of the pre-civil rights era. I have a vivid memory of the deacons of Druid Hills Baptist Church at the corner of Ponce de Leon and North Highland Avenue, standing on the steps of the church with shotguns in hand just daring any African American to attempt entry. I visited Lester Maddox's restaurant, The Picric, on Sunday after church and saw the axe handles on display. The discussions of repression and discrimination in their rawest form are more than theoretical exercises. The influence of these events has left visceral and tangible changes to my perception of the human condition.

Being a high school and college student in the sixties and early seventies exposed me to new societal revelations. The Viet Nam War shaped my entire life. My husband was a victim of the draft and all the concomitant fears and post war traumas. I participated in my first protest march while attending William and Mary. Unfortunately, I missed the entire sexual revolution. I married young because the war left my generation with no guarantee of "later." And then life as wife, mother and school teacher consumed my existence. Maintaining my feminism in the midst of raising a family and dealing with the judgments of my southern female peers was not easy.

Yet, I have been able to transverse my changing identities throughout the evolution of my life experiences. Intrinsic to these identities is my passion for working with marginalized students. I have worked as an intervention/ reading specialist for 30 years. I have taught students in grade kindergarten through adult. I have experienced a string of reading methodologies, each being touted as the best. At the heart of this passion is the desire to level the achievement playing field for all children. All of these experiences drive my desire to make my research meaningful. To this end it is essential to remember the past and transcend the easy out of giving lip service to the issues of urban education. I can only hope I have met this high standard of scholarship.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations when interpreting the results of any qualitative study. First, the findings from this case study cannot be generalized to represent how all undiagnosed dyslexic women negotiated their figure world of school and determine the universality of strategies that were used to pass as literate. Instead of generalizing the findings, this study was designed to capture a greater understanding of dyslexia and the consequences of negotiating school without a definitive diagnosis. Every story will be unique but the pain will be quite similar. Another limitation is that the study is bounded by a time period of six months and the sample size is small. As is typical in qualitative research, the small sample size means findings are suggestive and should not be generalized.

A further limitation to this study is that all three participants possessed highly developed auditory memories, visual memories and cognitive capacities. This learning profile was serendipitous and a function of the small sample size. It is essential to realize that these three participants manifested one of a myriad of dyslexic learning profiles.

Over the duration of this study, I became quite close to my subjects. Knowing that the families of the participants would be reading the study, I felt that there were some observations and well as confessions that would be inappropriate to report. In the next chapter, I take a closer look at these women of courage.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The confessional is the quintessential symbol for the production of truth. The accompanying sacrament of penance was established by the Lateran Council of the Catholic Church in 1215 (Murray, 1993). On one side of the confessional is the individual, critically rehearsing the memory of her private, inner life; on the other side is the priest who listens and reacts according to principles laid down by his office. This Christian practice affirms the nature of the self as a hermeneutical reality, namely, the recognition that there is a truth in the subject, that the soul is the place where this truth resides, and that true discourses can be articulated concerning it.

In *The Will to Knowledge* (1976), Foucault states that Western societies have established the confession as one of the main rituals on which we rely for the production of truth. Confession, then, has a dual purpose of providing a mechanism for stating truth, but also of making truth. For Foucault, truth claims are creative acts closely associated with the genealogy of the word ‘avowal’ and as such signify someone’s acknowledgements of his own actions and thoughts. “The confession has spread its effects far and wide. . . . One confesses in public and in private. . . . One confesses–or is forced to confess. . . . Western man has become a confessing animal” (p.59).

The testimony of witnesses, the learned methods of observation, and the confession have become the West’s most highly valued techniques for producing truth. We are a confessing society. We confess crimes, sins, thoughts, desires, illnesses and troubles. The willing penitent tells with the greatest precision that which is most difficult to tell. Confession changes us. It exonerates, redeems, and purifies those who engage in this cleansing act. It lifts burdens, liberates, and promises salvation.

Each of us has multiple life stories to confess. This process of disclosure provides a mechanism for stating what may or may not be the truth. Postmodern thought has greatly influenced contemporary culture, the hallmark of which is the assertion that there is no absolute truth. Matzat (1997, p.7) succinctly frames the nature of truth when he states that “the only absolute truth that exists in the postmodern mentality is that there is no such thing as absolute truth, and as far as the postmodern scholar is concerned, *that is absolutely true*." Truth claims are creative acts that signify one’s interpretation of one’s own actions and thoughts (Foucault, 1976). Our lives are about a myriad of people, places, and things (Gergen and Gergen, 1988). Many factors shape the life stories we will tell and how we will tell them. Local factors shaping our life stories include the immediate circumstances of the storytelling, the audience, and our own present concerns. Change and struggle are said to be universal themes of life stories. The women I interviewed stressed change and struggle in regard to their lives with dyslexia.

This chapter is an interpretive narrative reported as it was told to me from the memories of three women. The narrative revolves around the two research questions that were the focus of the study: (1) How do adult women who were undiagnosed dyslexic girls reflect upon their negotiations of identity in the figured world of school (Holland et al., 1998)? (2) Is there evidence that girls attempt to pass as literate? If so, what types of “passing” attempts and techniques are used by dyslexic adolescent girls to appear more literate? Data were analyzed by extrapolating themes from interviews, observations and researcher’s field notes obtained from the confessions of three adult dyslexic women. Throughout the chapter, I discuss theoretical perspectives to explain and describe the findings, informing the purpose of this inquiry, and to acquire a deeper understanding of how undiagnosed dyslexic girls negotiate their figured worlds of school. While analyzing

the data from these images, metaphors, stories and concepts, the implementation of cross-case analysis minimized the inclination to reach premature conclusions by requiring close examination of the data by theme across all cases investigated (Merriam, 1998). When a pattern from one case type was corroborated by the evidence from another, the finding was supported. When evidence conflicted, deeper probing of the data was necessary to identify the cause or source of conflict. To answer the research question of how undiagnosed dyslexic adolescent girls negotiate the figured world of school, analysis of multiple positions as described by the participants was used to focus on the participants' negotiations of the context of the classroom and the negotiations of peers. The actual words of the participants were used whenever possible. To achieve this end, I introduce the participants, examine the nature of the negotiations of their figured world of school, and finally, analyze the behaviors and strategies associated with the act of passing as literate.

The Penitents and Their Negotiations of the Figured World of School

> *I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful" (Ordinatio Sacerdotalis 4). Pope John Paul II.*

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. In the 17th century, young priests, because of their inexperience, were not considered worthy to be confessors. In Greece, one must receive special permission to hear confessions. In Russia, confession is a sacrament reserved only for old priests. Through the centuries, women have never been allowed to assume the role of confessor (Murray, 1993). Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. However, I defiantly position myself as an old female priest with 34 years of experience observing the sins of an inequitable institution we call the American school. From this

position, I seek a relationship between confessor and penitent that will eventually culminate in feelings of comfort, trust, respect, sanctity and elation.

I Love Lucy

"Lucy is not a beautiful woman, but people seldom realized it when captured by her charms." These are the words Lucy requested that I use as her introduction. My first interview with Lucy, and all of our subsequent interviews, took place at an unlikely confessional, a cabana table with umbrella. This holy nook pressed close to the painted brick wall of a premier design center for residential furnishings. I sat for a long time waiting anxiously, thinking Lucy had had second thoughts. But in a flourish, Lucy walked out of the adjacent door, looked at me, lit the first of at least twenty cigarettes, and said, "I guess you're my date." It quickly became obvious that Lucy felt comfortable behind the screen. When asked questions about family, school and other things in her life, I had a keen sense that I was to keep a safe distance.

Lucy self-identified as a dyslexic and alcoholic. She is tall, thin, 62, and wears her red hair cut close to her head. Her leathered skin, smoker's mouth, and constant furtive glances reveal her roughhewn lifestyle. Gesturing to the door from which she had just emerged, Lucy explained that this was *the* essential source for interior designers. The building encompassed 550,000 square feet, and included 80 showrooms that offered a comprehensive collection of the industry's finest product lines including furniture, fabric, kitchen, bath, fine art, antiques, lighting, and accessories. Lucy proudly explained that the facility was only open to design trade professionals and a photo identification card was issued and must be worn by all visitors. But Lucy is a rule breaker, and with a wink explained that we were going in the back door.

I began the interview with a review of informed consent, explaining that I would read it to her or that she could have a trusted other read it to her. Lucy's finger ran down the page stopping with significance along the way and then announced, "I guess you're not going to kill me so let's get started." After hitting the record button on the tape-recorder, Lucy began her story with her first memories of struggling to read.

Lucy negotiates text. Lucy grew up on a farm, which she said "was the best thing that ever happened." When she was five she moved to Lynchburg, Virginia and entered kindergarten, the first of several moves during her early years. Her first memories of difficulty with the reading process were triggered by memories of her third move. When she changed schools in the first grade, she remembers having trouble with "some pronunciations." By the time she entered third grade, her memories take on more clarity:

> I was in the third grade and reading *Dick, Jane and Sally* with my father at night. Anything that started in the letters WH I couldn't figure it out. Had no idea. I couldn't do a what, when, why, where. I can do that now. I couldn't do it in the third grade and my father could not figure out, in his words, "Honey, what the hell is wrong with you?

Lucy's literacy journey took a detour when she encountered her first basal reader. The Dick, Sally and Jane to whom she refers were characters in a then popular basal series published by Scott, Foresman, and Company (Luke, 1987). Organized around the daily life of the well known characters of Dick, Jane, Sally, Spot, and Puff, this series became the most widely used reading books in the 1950's and 1960's. Education critics claimed that the books contained stereotyped characters, and were sexist and racist. The upper-class, suburban setting was irrelevant to the lives of increasing numbers of children. The texts used a controlled vocabulary and phonics method that were also criticized. Millions of children learned to read through these textbooks. Unfortunately, Lucy was not one of these.

Lucy negotiates family. Lucy's mother, a kindergarten teacher, recognized that Lucy struggled with reading. She encouraged Lucy to read, but she met strong resistance. Lucy already perceived reading as a chore. When Lucy did acquiesce and engage in reading practice, she had no retention of what she had read, thus feeding the cycle of frustration and resistance. Even as an educator, Lucy's mother lacked the information that might enable her to attain insights into her daughter's condition. Frustrated, Lucy's mother enrolled her in a speed reading course, which added to everyone's frustration.

> We didn't know about it then. We just didn't know about it. You know, they didn't know much about dyslexia. Mother, bless her heart, one summer sent me to a speed reading class. (Laughter) I'd get so f---ing frustrated.

When speed reading proved to be ineffective, Lucy's mother attempted a new tactic. She enrolled Lucy in piano lessons. Lucy's reaction to this new challenge was bittersweet. The task of learning to reading music mocked her weakness, but the music itself provided Lucy with her first glimpse of her innate potential to learn.

> Like, I could read those notes and I couldn't read Dick, Jane and Sally? Why I remember particularly about learning to play the piano was that if you would play it for me I could pick out the notes with my fingers. If I could hear it I could learn it. And taking piano lessons was the first time I realized if you would read it to me, I could get it.

Lucy was first born. She had a brother who was just a year and eight days younger than she. He carried her father's name and he looked like her father. Not surprisingly, Lucy believed that he was the favored child. Rather than being an ally, her brother added to the growing throngs of those who made Lucy feel inferior. As she recalls the influence of her brother on her life, enmeshed in her words are signals that reveal the birth of resistance to her positioning as "Poor Lucy" and hints of emerging agency.

> My brother always tried to make me feel like I was dumb. “Aww, sis,” he’d say. It was his favorite expression. “Aww, sis, you can't figure out anything.” And the truth was I could figure out a lot of things. I had huge street sense. I mean, I could find my way around a strange city because I knew north, south, east, and west. Or I’d listen to the news and I could tell you what happened at the White House the day before. And I learned to use my eyes, which is how I make my living now.

Familial expectations could have solidified Lucy’s positioning as one with little academic ability. Her words suggest that she had fallen prey to the labels placed on her by the individuals in her life. Yet, she subtly reveals a growing disassociation with this powerless positioning when she refers to herself in the third person and expresses growing discontent with the position to which she has been recruited.

> So Lucy was always a C student and just happened to have a brother with a 158 IQ. Lucy brought home Cs, but if her brother brought home one B he was grounded. He was the genius. I would hear my father saying, “That's all poor Lucy can do.” Lucy just got tired of being poor Lucy.

A particular strength of the poststructuralist perspective on identity is that it recognizes the essential force of discourse, the way one talks about the self, and at the same time recognizes that people are capable of exercising choice in relation to those discourses (Broughton & Fairbanks, 2002). One Saturday afternoon, Lucy’s mother gave her the opportunity for which she had been waiting. Lucy’s mother escorted her into the kitchen and asked her to sit on a stool in the middle of the kitchen. From this position of physical isolation and emotional abandonment, Lucy faced a barrage of questions concerning her current schooling and her plans for the future. Lucy accepted this unexpected attention and immersed herself in a one-on-one session with her mother replete with harsh self-reflection and a subsequent rebirth. Through the course of the afternoon, she engaged in the process of authoring her “I” as she assessed the strengths and weaknesses of her social capital. The process was dialogic in that it involved a

continual and conflicting dialogue between the “I”, her mother, and the world (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). Lucy had received and processed defining words that were polluted with each sender’s assumptions about her. Lucy took these words and infused them with her own intention. In this manner, Lucy’s individual’s Voice (Bakhtin, 1981) came forth. This process of authoring the self is tantamount to developing one’s self. To be Lucy she must understand herself from the perspective of others while positioning herself outside their grasps.

> I don’t know how, um, it all happened but I knew that I couldn't read. I knew that I wasn't pretty. And I had to find a gimmick to get along. So I used whatever comedic skills I had, and when my mother put me on a bar stool one Saturday, she told me I wasn't getting up until I knew what I was going to do when I went to college. Now, I’d never expressed any burning desire to go to college, but she had gone to college and daddy had, so therefore, I was. So I sat there and I went through the professions, accountants and lawyers and doctors and knew I didn't want to be in education because all I heard was that crap across the dining room table every night. Finally, it came to me. I said, “Mother, I've got it.”
>
> She said, “What?”
>
> I said, “I want to be Lucille Ball.”
>
> And I knew it right then. I wanted to be Lucy. And I figured out that the more humorous I was, the further I got, and I didn't have to say a lot. I just had to observe and think and say something funny.

Once Lucy positioned herself as Lucille Ball, she was able to see the world from a new vantage point. At that moment, in terms of the images, metaphors, stories and concepts that are now relevant, Lucy gained novel perspectives on the world through which she could learn to view peers, assets, limitations and behaviors with new meaning. Her new position as Lucy provided her with the capacity to influence her own behavior in her figured worlds. Even with the new persona, Lucy still had to negotiate the issues surrounding her undiagnosed dyslexia and face the conflict caused by her relegation to groups designated for students with low reading ability.

Lucy negotiates stigma. At death, judgment is instantaneous, and the soul knows immediately what the verdict is (Murray, 1993). The choices are heaven, which is reserved for the perfectly pure; Purgatory, for the imperfectly pure; and hell, for the definitely not pure. For Lucy, her symbolic death and verdict were swift. Lucy's relegation to the lowest performing group was hell. She recounted her first experience with ability grouping. Her final comments were words that revealed her continued resistance to the position of "poor Lucy," its concomitant stigma, and the power of her growing agency.

Lucy: I was put in classes that had the slower, poorer students. I know that for a fact.

Ellen: How do you know that?

Lucy: Because they were all the goobers around me, not the cool smart kids.

Ellen: When did that start?

Lucy: Sophomore in high school.

Ellen: So it never happened before then?

Lucy: No. They don't do that in grade school and middle school. They do that in high school. They weed you out and they put all the A's, the B's and the C's together because they don't want to have an A being held down by some C who can't get it. Meanwhile the A's have to excel with the A's. And sometimes right now they're given different curriculums. I mean, my little niece is just now graduating from high school, and she's got three college courses under her belt.

Ellen: So when you were placed in that class or those classes, was it a jolt?

Lucy: I didn't know it was coming until I realized that it had hit me. And then I went up to my teacher who was single and I said, "You know, Miss McCutcheon, I think you and I are the only two in here who aren't married." She burst out laughing. Because I knew I was in a class with a bunch of dumb asses. But then [pause] I knew more than those other kids somehow.

Donna Alvermann (2001) suggests that our identities as readers are decided for us. Readers who have difficulty with literacy skills are positioned as “struggling” (Ash, 2002), "remedial" (Wilhelm, 1997), "reluctant" (Wilhelm, 1997), and "marginalized" (Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000). Lucy’s was blindsided by her positioning as a struggling reader and used humor to negotiate the marginalizing label placed upon her. She reached out to her only intellectual equal in the room to seek acknowledgement that this room of “dumb asses” was not where she belonged.

Lucy negotiates peers. Despite Bourdieu and Passeron’s (1990) assertions that our positions are coerced by societal pressures, and are immutable, Lucy found cracks and openings that allowed her to take up positions as something other than those by which she was recognized in the social and cultural worlds she inhabited (Bettie, 2003). These cracks provided a space by which, in the ongoing interactions of her social and cultural lives, Lucy could act in ways that positioned her differently. In other words, they provided a space for agency.

Given that literacy shaming is a potent and debilitating form of symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990), this type of denigration should reflect negatively on Lucy’s social standing and her ability to command peer respect. All human actions take place within social fields, which are the arenas in which the struggle for available resources occurs. Individuals, institutions, and other agents try to distinguish themselves from others, and acquire capital which is useful or valuable. Because fields are dynamic, valued forms of social and cultural capital are also dynamic and arbitrary. Social capital is inherent in the structure of relations between and among actors in and out of school. Lucy is quick to explain the benefits that her natural leadership abilities, interpersonal

skills, and linguistic facility provide. Her social abilities expand her social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) enough to warrant her recruitment and repositioning (Holland et al., 1998) into the center of the school's social context, despite her reading difficulties. Her words provide the social perspective to witness how she authors the world. Her words are infused with intention and Lucy's Voice is heard (Bakhtin, 1981).

Lucy: Socially I tend to be a clown. And I'll run up to some pretty snotty people now and then and one boy recently -- not a boy, he's a man, but they're all boys to me -- he said, "And who would you be?" And I said, "Well, I would be Margaret Thatcher if I had my choice."

Ellen: This confidence that you have, so obviously have, did you have it in high school and elementary school?

Lucy: Yes, it was the leadership skill that gave it to me then. When everybody wanted me to be president of everything and I was still a C student. There was a reason. And the answer was I'd get the job done and I'd line you up.

Ellen: How would you get the job done? What was your technique?

Lucy: Giving responsibility and delegating to people and getting the group to operate as one to get a task done instead of fragmented little loose ends everywhere.

Ellen: So how many presidencies did you have over the course of your high school years?

Lucy: Well, I started out being home room president, and then I was president of the drama club.

Ellen: Really?

Lucy: That was Lucy. And I had to make a decision one day whether to go to the state championship in tennis where I was the captain or play the part of George Washington slept here. I had to make a choice.

Ellen: And what did you do?

Lucy: I played tennis and I won the state championship. That was my choice.

Ellen: That was a hard choice.

Lucy: I was president of my sorority, president of the Spanish club. Tri High Y, which was a sort of a church thing that was after school, I was president of that. I wasn't president of the senior class because

> that was for an A student. That was for the valedictorian. But I was president of the social things.

With few traditional literacy skills, Lucy used her social capital to get things done. She delegated responsibilities to group members and created a cohesive whole to accomplish a task. To access needed information that was in print, she would "get my daddy to read something for me." They had the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and she would say, "Daddy, read up on this for me and he'd just tell me and then I had it." Lucy also used the social capital of others to accomplish those tasks she could not get done alone. She told of needing an artist for a project, so she picked the two peers who had the artistic skills. When she needed someone who would be able to sell tickets, she recruited the "cute ones." She explained, "Cute people can always sell more tickets than ugly people. It's just a given. Not that it's right, but it's a given. And just things like that to get the task done."

The rest of Lucy's story. Lucy successfully negotiated her figured world of school by using her social capital and by relying on her learning strengths to circumvent her literacy limitations. Her finesse enabled her to attend college, albeit not the one of her choosing:

> Mother sent me off to a college that I won't name, but I didn't want to go there. Um, but because of my grades it was the only place I could get in and I hated it. And I rebelled against it and I didn't go to class. I learned how to play bridge, which fascinated me, and instead of going to my classes, I played bridge until a year went by and they kicked me out because I wasn't attending class and my grades were poor.

Lucy moved back home and resumed her position of "Poor Lucy." Much to her chagrin, her mother made her go to work. After months of unsatisfying work and low pay, Lucy jumped at the opportunity to go back to college. With renewed motivation, she attended her state university but admits that she "didn't do very well there either." She attributed

this failure with the social chaos of the 1960's and a social disconnect. Yet, Lucy fell in love for the first time.

> A lot of the kids looking like hippies and I looked like little miss debutante and, you know, I didn't fit in. And I still wasn't good at my classes with the exception of psychology and sociology. I loved that. I just loved it. I just absolutely loved it. Just couldn't take enough. All of my electives I'd take in that.

Miracles continued when she took a "stupid class in education" just because she was getting near graduation and needed some additional credit hours. During the class, she took an aptitude test. Lucy describes the test as not being the "usual test." She described it as a test about gears. Test items involved visual/spatial manipulations during which she had to determine "if a gear went this way and it grabbed teeth this way which direction did it go?" This task was repeated and culminated in solving the puzzle at the end. The test required no reading.

> I got the highest score in the class. So my teacher called me in and said, "Lucy, I've looked into your academic record." And I said, "OK, it's public." He said, "I see you're a C student." And I said, "Yep, that's all I can do." And he said, "I want you to know you got the highest grade in the class." I said, "You must have somebody else's paper." He said, "No, you understood all of that and some of the other kids just got zeroes. They couldn't figure anything out and all your answers were right. How did you do that?" And again I said I don't know. I'd never taken a test with gears before. I didn't know how I knew that. A girl that couldn't pass math or reading. How could I do those gears? And I don't know the answer to a lot of questions, how I can do something. I just know that after he told me that I wasn't stupid, that I was not stupid any more. It was the first time I ever thought that I wasn't "poor Lucy." I was president of absolutely everything in my high school. I ran the show. I was the pied piper. I have huge leadership skills. I'm the leader in my job. I'm the leader in everything that I do. And it's just a personality that's there.

The implications of this scenario are significant not only to the changing identities of Lucy, but to the lives of individuals yet unchanged due to the absence of early diagnosis of dyslexia. Early diagnostic testing should occur whenever there are discrepancies or

inconsistencies in students' academic skills. Children who have reported having difficulty understanding information, following instructions, misinterpreting information or using the term "dumb" as a self-descriptor should be evaluated. If an early diagnostic evaluation had been given, Lucy might have been identified as "Gifted Dyslexic." Silverman (2002) coined the term "visual-spatial learner" to describe children like Lucy who see the big picture, but who have difficulty with regular step-by-step learning. Her book, *Upside-Down Brilliance:The Visual Spatial Learner (*2002), explained why traditional classroom teaching can be debilitating, and includes practical teaching techniques that will help these children experience success.

Years later Lucy obtained a definitive diagnosis of dyslexia. When asked how she felt about knowing the cause of her reading struggles, Lucy's response revealed that she processed the diagnosis with the same sense of humor she used to process all the challenges of her life.

> OK, I haven't been able to read, I'm a C student. That guy that tested me on those gears told me I wasn't dumb. I get my sixes and nines wrong, and I always have my right and my lefts wrong. When I found out, I just went, "Well you're just a," as I call it, "a lex-dyxic." (laughs)

Today, Lucy holds degrees in retailing and merchandizing, psychiatric social work and interior design. Lucy humorously describes her accomplishments as "being educated beyond her intelligence." She works in a prestigious design house, undaunted by the rich and famous who walk through the door. This confidence did not happen by accident. Lucy started taking courses in speech. She laughingly comments, "The girl who can't read takes speech." She asserts that she can stand up in front of a group with confidence and just from note cards that would have one or two words on it. She uses these skills to teach a class at the design house called "You Don't Know Jack" to interior

design students who “don’t get it in school.” She gives them “what they need and I can speak for two and a half hours from one five by eight index card.” She is generous in imparting what she has learned. She understands acutely the limitations of formal education. She knows they don’t get it in college so she proceeds with a clear strategy: “I fill in the blanks and I irritate them and I aggravate them and then I puff them up and I blow them up and then I tell them what my dear, dear, dear friend Michelangelo said: “The problem with most of us isn't that we set our aim too high but we set it too low and then we make our mark.” Reflecting on what life would be like if she had not been dyslexic, she responds with disarming honesty.

> Lucy: Maybe if I had ever learned to read I could be more than a furniture salesman. Not that I think that that's a demeaning job but I mean maybe I could have been more.
>
> Ellen: In what way do you feel like dyslexia has limited you?
>
> Lucy: Well, I have a friend Sue Ann. Sue Ann works for IBM and has all these fancy jobs and she talks about spreadsheets and all of that. I don’t know anything about a spreadsheet. She doesn't know mahogany from walnut. So at 62, I am OK with me. I'm an OK person. Um, I don’t make a lot of money. I will retire poor but I will at least look back over my career and say you know what, that was a blast. Just a blast.

Lucy’s journey as an undiagnosed dyslexic resulted in a bittersweet ending. A serendipitous meeting with an education professor and a “test of gears” gave her a glimpse into what her life might have been. She lamented the loss of opportunity to excel in a world outside that of selling mahogany and silks. Today, she still constructs herself as falling short of what she might have been.

The Cellist

> Alone...listless...breakfast table in an otherwise empty room
> Young girl...violins...center of her own attention
> The mother reads aloud child tries to understand it
> Tries to make her proud

The shades go down it's in her head
Painted room...can't deny there's something wrong...

Don't call me daughter not fit to
The picture kept will remind me
Don't call me daughter not fit to
The picture kept will remind me
Don't call me...

Pearl Jam, *Daughter*

The Cellist sparkled with forced cheerfulness for our first interview. She avoided telling me her exact age, but I gleaned from her story that she was in her mid to late forties. She had a boyish appearance with her white blonde hair cut as if a bowl had been carefully placed on her head before the scissors did their work. Her face was shiny clean without a hint of makeup. She seemed prepared for the disclosures that were to come.

The sacrament of Catholic Confession can occur in anonymity behind the protective barrier of the confessional screen. Two disembodied voices engage in disclosure, guidance, judgment and forgiveness. The other option is a face-to-face confession in which two human beings openly engage with full exposure. The Cellist began our interview behind the metaphorical screen and was visibly nervous. By the last interview she had relaxed into a childlike posture on her living room sofa and moved the screen aside.

The intention of face-to-face confession is to create a more welcoming, less intimidating environment than that offered by the cold, dark, screen-divided little room of tradition. The Cellist’s home provided the perfect setting for this intimate discourse. She surrounds herself with gifts from children artfully displayed on the

walls of her 70 year old house. There are treasures from travel and artifacts from parents long since dead juxtaposed in an odd symmetry. A suitcase is open and partially filled in anticipation of a trip to visit her brother and his family. As she serves tea, The Cellist begins her story of courage and determination.

The Cellist explains that she has spent the last 21 years at one of the oldest therapeutic, educational centers for children and adults with hearing, speech, language or learning disabilities. One might think that it was serendipitous that The Cellist arrived at this particular facility. Precipitated by dissatisfaction with her job, she took immediate action when a co-worker mentioned that there was an opening for a music teacher at a nearby therapeutic facility:

> I had been teaching at a prestigious private school, and two things happened. One is I became increasingly uncomfortable with that high-pressure learning. I never liked it. And -- and then my job configuration was changing -- going to change ra -- drastically, and I didn't -- that was a good time to leave. And the day that I learned about that, somebody said, "Oh, there's a -- they want to hire a music teacher at the therapeutic learning center," and so I thought, Well, OK, it's close; I'll check it out. And I did.

The Cellist negotiates text. It was in this facility that The Cellist began to heal and understand the nature of her reading difficulties. She set forth on the journey of remembering wounds that were still raw and some that had festered. We ventured forth from the beginning.

> The Cellist: I have visions of first grade reading groups. And just, I never could figure out what -- why those kids could understand -- or could get from the written page what I couldn't. Well, I mean, they could look at the page and say, "This says this," and I'm going, "Where? How does it say that?" And, you know, eventually, you know, figured out enough pieces so I could struggle through.
>
> Ellen: What did those pieces look like?

The Cellist: Yeah, like shapes of words, the letters that hang down, the letters that stick up. But it was also wiggly. You know, my reading was wiggly. OK, just -- I've noticed a long time ago, that, you know, if it's on the -- the left side, I'm going to read it more than I'm going to do on the right side. You know, there's a line here, (points to an imaginary margin where visual tracking stops on the page) just about, you know, four, five words in, and then -- four or five words, and four...But, I think it's -- it's more how it's portrayed. I mean, it's not across the line. I just don't quite get there sometimes. -- I was really good at poetry. I got that. That made sense to me in a way that it didn't to other kids.

Paulsen (2005) asserts that the dyslexics' eyes do not move relentlessly forward but go backward at times, fixate some words more than once, skip some words altogether, spend a small portion of time on some words and a large portion of time on others, and even examine different parts of different words. It would take further assessment to determine the exact cause of The Cellist's difficulty in moving her eyes continuously from left to right. It may be related to her level of fatigue associated with decoding difficulties or it could demonstrate inconsistencies of expenditures of effort relative to perceived task difficulty. The lines of the poem are shorter and seem more manageable. As The Cellist moved her eyes away from the text, she was reported that looking for clues in the pictures could help identify the words. The Cellist describes the distraction of picture clues when unable to decode the word "splash."

The Cellist: "Splash." I remember that one specifically.

Ellen: What do you remember about "splash"?

The Cellist: Oh, just that was -- I didn't know the word.

Ellen: Did you stop?

The Cellist: Yeah, yeah.

Ellen: Who did you look to, or did you look up?

The Cellist: Um, I think I just looked at the picture.

Ellen: Why are you searching the picture?

The Cellist: For that word that I don't know.

Ellen: Do you have any memories of insights that helped you read?

The Cellist: The only one -- the only one I can think of as an 'aha' moment is my fifth grade teacher just saying, "Just look at a section of the word." That was a big thing.

Ellen: What would she tell you to do?

The Cellist: "Look at the first syllable"

Ellen: And no one had said that to you up until that point?

The Cellist: If they did, I hadn't been attending.

Ellen: Did you start practicing that?

The Cellist: It helped. Isn't that amazing? (laughs)

The Cellist: Mm-hmm.

Ellen: What was your strategy up to this point?

The Cellist: Guessing.

Ellen: Guessing whole words.

The Cellist: Yeah.

Ellen: Had you memorized a lot of whole words?

The Cellist: No, I was a good guesser.

Ellen: How did you guess?

The Cellist: Well, the shape of the word was a big thing.

Ellen: The shape, that configuration of the word.

The Cellist: Mm-hmm.

Ellen: Did you use the initial sound?

The Cellist: Oh, yes, I always did the initial sounds. And the end sounds.

Ellen: And the shape of the word.

The Cellist: Mm-hmm. And what went on in the middle, who knows….

Ellen: And if it made sense to you, you would just keep right on going.

The Cellist: Mm-hmm, yep.

Ellen: Do you still do that to this day?

The Cellist: Yep, I do.

Ellen: So when you're reading books on your own and you don't have the pressure of reading out loud, it really doesn't matter as long as the story continues.

The Cellist: You guessed it. Oh, I was so cute, and I wanted to do such a good job, and I was so eager, and I really, really, really wanted to do well.

Ellen: And so what other strategies did you use to try to ensure that you could do well?

The Cellist: Oh, the pictures. You know, those -- those pictures were great in those books. And I listened really carefully, I think, to what the other kids said.

To The Cellist, negotiating text seems to require mastery of a serial and linear process. Examination of most texts reveals serially presented text with letters and words proceeding from left to right, with no overlap or backtracking. Just and Carpenter (1980) formulated the hypothesis that there is no appreciable lag between what is fixated, maintaining the gaze on text, and what is processed. If this hypothesis is correct, then when the reader looks at a word or object, he or she also processes cognitively for exactly as long as the recorded fixation. Instead of a serial data uploading model, eye movement research points to the reader searching for information to aid in the construction of meaning. This difference may be subtle, but it is important as it relates to The Cellist's difficulty getting beyond midpoint in a line of print. The exact cause of her difficulty in moving her eyes continuously from left to right may be related to search for meaning. This hypothesis is substantiated by The Cellist's eye movements away from the text desperately looking for picture clues could have had impact on meaning as well.

The Cellist negotiates family. Osman (1997) suggests that the presence of a child with dyslexia in the family has a profound influence on family dynamics. This influence extends to the social and emotional development of siblings. Adverse familial effects are more likely to occur when (a) there are only two children, one of whom has a

disabling condition; (b) the children are the same sex and close in age; (c) the child without the problem is the eldest female in the family; and (d) parents cannot accept their child's learning disability.

In families with affected children, parents tend to expect more of the unaffected sibling. These expectations often focus on high academic achievement. Osman (1997) suggests the focus on high academic achievement reflects the need by parents for the unaffected sibling to compensate for the under achievement of the dyslexic child. Minuchin (1988) also found that parents expect their unaffected sibling to perform better at school or excel in extracurricular activities and suggests that families with dyslexic and non-dyslexic siblings are characterized by higher levels of anxiety and family discord. Lardieri, Blacher, and Swanson (2000) found that families experiencing high levels of stress could be characterized by dysfunction or chaos.

The Cellist's family was unusual in that both The Cellist and her brother had dyslexia. Curiously, The Cellist's dyslexia was ignored. When her little brother's reading problem surfaced, he became the focus of the mother's attention. He was designated as the child with reading issues. The Cellist's attempts at self-advocating for assistance with her reading difficulties were often ignored.

The Cellist:	I tried to tell her, "I think I do that, too." "No, you don't. You're fine."
Ellen:	So she was just total denial.
The Cellist:	Yes.
Ellen:	Because she just couldn't -- because she didn't want to deal with it?
The Cellist:	Well, I think -- well... Yeah, I think that's part of it, or, you know, I was doing fine enough.
Ellen:	"Fine enough" meant what? What does "fine enough" mean?

The Cellist: You know, I -- I wasn't raising any flags for anybody or causing anybody trouble. But I think, you know, maybe being a girl -- well, I don't know if that's easier or not, but—

Ellen: What do you mean? Talk about that.

The Cellist: I just -- well, girls are nicer people.

The fact that The Cellist's mother chose to overlook her dyslexia and focus on her brother's dyslexia is supported by the research of Gaub and Carlson (1997). They propose that the girls who are referred to clinics are those most severely affected. They trigger the referral process as a result of the "squeaking wheel" phenomenon by displaying co-occurring overt behavioral patterns of inattention. Szatmari's (1992) population studies found a ratio of identification of one girl for every three male diagnoses. The Cellist attributes her mother's rejection of her condition as being motivated by gendered differences in behavior and perceived need. So The Cellist was left to her own devices. Careful not to overly demonize her parents, she clarified, "They were crummy parents, but I don't think they were evil; I just needed you to know that."

The Cellist negotiates stigma. The Cellist revealed her diagnosis of co-morbid conditions of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and dyslexia. Mayes and Calhoun (2000) reported that learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, are the most commonly coexisting condition with ADD. The secondary characteristics of dyslexia and ADD in girls can have a profound influence on their adolescent literacy experience. These secondary characteristics can include low self esteem, depression, demoralization, stress and social skills deficit.

When faced with the manifestation of these coexisting conditions in reading groups, likely and unlikely heroes came to The Cellist's rescue. Teachers turn often to those students who possess embodied reading capital (Compton-Lilly, 2007) to provide

the needed assistance. These are the students whose words, mannerisms, and gestures fulfill school ideals by displaying an allegiance to school-sanctioned reading norms. They read the right books. They participate in norms for reading behavior, such as reading silently, decoding words, and answering questions about stories. The Cellist's teacher privileged the position of a male member of the group who possessed reading capital and reinforced her position as helpless, further emphasizing her inadequacy as a reader.

Ellen:	When you didn't know a word was there somebody stepping in as hero?
The Cellist:	Well, the teacher did, yeah.
Ellen:	If you didn't know a word, would she always supply it? Do you recall?
The Cellist:	(pause) Yeah, and I think she would also encourage other kids to do it. "See, George knows that word. George, tell her that word." She would have George tell me.

When questioned about additional strategies that the teacher provided, The Cellist reported the teacher's attempt at using a structural analysis technique focusing on syllabication. In addition, she was encouraged to use picture clues as a vehicle for informed guessing. She also elaborated on the use of silent reading as a means for improving comprehension. Each successive failure reinforced her position as outcast as she was constantly humiliated in front of her peers.

Ellen:	Your peers were watching this going on.
The Cellist:	Mm-hmm.
Ellen:	Did they have any kind of reaction as they watched you struggle through this oral reading situation?
The Cellist:	I don't remember too much except for impatience sometimes.
Ellen:	And how would they show their impatience?
The Cellist:	They would say, "Oh, come on." (pause) But I -- the -- what the teacher did and said hurt more, I think. Well, is

that true? (pause) I seem to remember more -- much more of what the teacher did, Mrs. Koonz—

Ellen: What would she say?

The Cellist: "You're just not trying."“You know that word." And she's always the one -- the one that put me on the spot, not the kids.

Ellen: What does "putting on the spot" mean to you?

The Cellist: Well, I mean, we had to take turns in reading group.

Ellen: She put you on the spot by making you read aloud.

The Cellist: Yeah. And then reading silently -- oh, when we came to learning to read silently, I was clueless! You mean you're supposed to look at this and then...I was absolutely floored that this kid over here was able to say this was going on and this is -- I'm just going, "What? How?" And it was just like a total jaw-dropping thing. I had no clue.

Ellen: So when you were looking at those words, reading silently, what were you thinking?

The Cellist: Well, I wasn't even -- I didn't even know I was supposed to look at the words, I think.

Ellen: What would you do?

The Cellist: Yeah, and I might kind of look around to see what other kids were doing and trying to get clues from that.

Recent research shows that 59% of kindergarten through eighth-grade teachers surveyed admitted to still using round-robin reading or a variation of the technique (Ash, Kuhn, & Walpole, 2009). Round-robin reading is a teacher-directed, transmissional strategy in which the teacher calls on students one after the other to read one paragraph, one page, or a section of text from one heading to another. Students who are not reading orally are asked to follow along silently with the reader. Readers who struggle often lose their places, and proficient readers are either bored or read ahead of the group. The Cellist has vivid memories of how reading instruction was transmitted in her classroom as well as her visceral reaction to ability grouping.

The Cellist: I was just thinking, you know, it was the whole reading group thing. You know, who's in the best reading group; who's in the -- who's struggling.

Ellen: So you were divided out into groups.

The Cellist: Mm-hmm. A little bit, mm-hmm. But I had better strategies than -- I'm just thinking, because Mary Ellen Porter was in my second-grade class, and she had more troubles than I did. And -- and I knew she wasn't dumb. But then, you know, I had troubles and I felt dumb, so --- who knows.

Ellen: You were in the same reading group with Mary Ellen?

The Cellist: Sometimes. It kind of -- you know, if -- if you... Yeah, sometimes.

Ellen: But your best friends were not in your reading group?

The Cellist: No.

Ellen: Were they in the top group?

The Cellist: Probably, yeah. Yes. Forget the "probably." Yes, they were.

Ellen: What else do you remember being in reading group?

The Cellist: Figuring out where I was going to be reading.

Ellen: Was it predictable enough for you to be able to do that?

The Cellist: No, I don't think so.

Ellen: You never knew what you were going to have to read, and so when it came time for you, you had never had a chance to read through it?

The Cellist: Except for the pictures.

Ellen: And you'd already looked through all of those.

The Cellist: And I may or may not be following along the words -- where the words are, tracking.

Ellen: So how did you know when it was your turn to read?

The Cellist: Well, -- I hoped -- I always hoped I was at the beginning of the page.

Ellen: So you assumed that they were going to read an entire page?

The Cellist: You know when we turn the page. Or you can also look at the -- where the kid's finger is.

Ellen: That helped you.

The Cellist: Yes.

Ellen: Were you ever chastised for not being in the right place?

The Cellist: Oh, of course.

Ellen: How would that happen?

The Cellist: "Pay attention, you're -- you're not in the right place."

Ellen: Would she ever skip you because you were on the wrong page?

The Cellist: Never, no.

Ellen: So she would always get you where you needed to be.

The Cellist: Mm-hmm. For better or for worse.

Organizing reading instruction through ability grouping escalates the stigma associated with being an undiagnosed dyslexic. Children in low groups typically have fewer opportunities to read while students in higher groups spend more time on critical thinking and read almost double the amount of low ability groups (Allington & Cunningham, 1996). The Cellist reveals a myriad of diversionary tactics to avoid the discomfort of reading aloud. When diversion no longer worked, The Cellist used strategies such as watching when the page was turned or looking to see where another child had placed his finger to determine where her oral reading should begin.

Ellen: So it's your turn to read. Tell me -- tell me what's going on within you.

The Cellist: Oooooh. (nervous/squirmy sound)

Ellen: Tell me about that.

The Cellist: Wanting to weasel out of it.

Ellen: And did you ever?

The Cellist: I'm sure I did.

Ellen: Can you remember any weaseling that you might have done to avoid reading orally?

The Cellist: Oh, "I need a tissue," you know. "Oh, my -- something's wrong with my eye," or...? "I need to go to the bathroom."

Ellen: So were you successful in weaseling out?

The Cellist: Sometimes.

Ellen: What about the times you couldn't weasel out.

The Cellist: It just hurt my stomach, you know. And sometimes -- and sometimes I did a good job. I don't know why. Sometimes things made more sense than others.

The Cellist's behavioral traits revealed the possibility of co-morbid condition of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and dyslexia. Wilcutt and Pennington (2000) reported that there is a relationship between inattention and reading disabilities in both boys and girls. Mayes and Calhoun (2000) reported dyslexia commonly coexisting condition with ADD. The irony is that there are fewer referrals for those who are most likely to present with dyslexia. The implications for these findings are important when considering the overlap of symptoms of ADD and dyslexia. The secondary characteristics of dyslexia and ADD in girls can have a profound impact on their adolescent literacy experience as well as their negotiation of peers.

The Cellist negotiates peers. The figured world of school functions as multiple contexts of meaning within which social encounters have significance and people's positions matter. Activities relevant to these worlds take meaning from them and are situated in particular times and places (Holland et al., 1998). The playground is a significant place for social encounters. The Cellist modestly reveals her high status outside the classroom and explains how she was quickly repositioned when recess began.

The Cellist: I was good on the playground, OK? There were other things I could do.

Ellen: How were you good on the playground?

The Cellist: Oh, do you just -- I was good at playing games. I was good at encouraging people. I was (pause) you know, among the top.

Ellen: You were a top athlete on the playground?

The Cellist: Well, I wouldn't say "athlete," but the encouragers, you know. I was a teacher already.

Ellen: You were coaching?

The Cellist: Well, and you say, "Oh, yes, you can do it! Come on!" -- one of those kind of kids.

Ellen: You were Queen of the playground.

The Cellist: Well, not Queen. I was kind of the -- the ladies in waiting, kind of.

The Cellist's privileged position outside the classroom was short lived. The move to junior high intersected with significant family issues. Her father lost his job and her clothes no longer measured up with those of her peers. She faced the ending of a lifelong incestuous relationship with her father. Her reference to herself as being "shiet and guy" hints at gender confusion.

Ellen: Let's go to middle school.

The Cellist: Middle school, when I became shiet and guy?

Ellen: When you became shy and quiet?

The Cellist: No, "shiet and guy." Never mind. Um, I think there was just a lot more I didn't get that I saw other kids getting. But puberty happened. I told you stuff was weird at my house. My father lost his job at that time. Um, so I didn't have this -- you know, like the clothes and stuff that a lot of kids had, but I felt like that meant more to me. Um, I had also been sexually abused by my father for a long time, so, you know, there was a whole lot that wasn't in place, so... This is confidential. That was scary to tell you, you know that.

Ellen: I know it is.

The Cellist: But, um, you know, there's just -- at home there was not a lot of -- there was no support, actually. And as I hit puberty, that became so complicated.

Ellen: Did any of your friends know about that?

The Cellist: No.

Ellen: Did anybody know about it?

The Cellist: No, except for my mother.

Performing literacy required extensive interpersonal political maneuvering, and impression management. McCarthey (2001) demonstrated how students' perceptions of

literacy abilities as well as their sense of the perceptions held by their parents and teachers of those same abilities influenced their broader sense of self. High status is often accorded to the position of proficient reader in the western world. Literacy has often been used to distinguish the elite within a society. These advantages inform the selection of "good reader" as the aspirational position for the undiagnosed dyslexic. To attain this position requires a complex management system rife with diversionary tactics. The Cellist summarizes this complexity of social positioning in simple terms. "Well, you know, you have this whole thing, and -- in school that says, you know, smart is good. Dumb is bad. And reading seems to be that determiner."

Particular ways of acting upon and acting with literacy place individuals and social groups into hierarchical positions within society (Compton-Lilly, 2007). Compton-Lilly suggests that these positions are indicators of social reading capital. Memberships in groups with high levels of social reading capital require the appearance of possessing good reading skills. In addition, social reading capital involves the ability to recognize, access, and utilize social relationships that support the reader. Once established, these social networks provide access to social, economic, and political power that are intrinsic to relationships with family members, teachers, and peers.

The Rest of The Cellist's story. Today The Cellist works to provide music enrichment for a hearing impaired preschool that incorporates a listening and spoken language program for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The elementary program that she serves includes children with mild to moderate language-based learning disabilities, including dyslexia. To achieve her goal of providing a music program that creates an active learning environment, The Cellist incorporates music theory based on

the philosophies of Orff Schulwerk music education. This philosophy was originated by the German composer Carl Orff and the Education through Movement program of the High/Scope Foundation. She accomplishes this goal by engaging the children in creative music making, using their bodies, voices, and minds to understand musical concepts.

Students attend music class twice a week. The curriculum includes folk songs and dances from various American and other cultures, traditional singing games, choral speaking, introduction to notation, listening activities, and creative movement. Poems, rhymes, games, songs, and dances are used as the basis for exploring, developing, and creating basic concepts. As children move through the elementary school, music instruction builds on this foundation, raising both the skill level and the complexity of musical works. Whenever possible, materials used in music coordinate with studies or activities going on in the classroom, including the production of original music for class plays.

The psycho-educational assessment clinic at this facility is where The Cellist was finally diagnosed. She went through her entire schooling experience with no formal assistance and without ever reading a book.

Ellen:	So you passed all the way through schooling without anyone ever knowing.
The Cellist:	Well, see -- I don't remember anybody ever just talking to me about me. You know, that just -- it wasn't part of the picture. I was invisible.
Ellen:	Tell me about being at the therapeutic learning center and somebody finally recognizing that you are dyslexic.
The Cellist:	Well -- when I first started here -- I said -- I do that, -- and then I found that -- that there's just a whole pattern going on.
Ellen:	That was a supportive experience?
The Cellist:	Absolutely. Yeah.

Ellen: Was it freeing? What was your reaction when you all of a sudden had a name to put on your struggles?

The Cellist: Well, actually, I think I had the name because of my little brother. He was the diagnosed.Yeah. The designator.

Ellen: So you knew that you were dealing with this same thing.

The Cellist: Yeah. Or at least, a version of it.

Ellen: When you were diagnosed as well -- tell me about that.

The Cellist: It was just nice. I felt very clever. I had figured that out by myself, all myself.

The Cellist is far from healed. She has undergone years of therapy related to both her undiagnosed dyslexia and her childhood sexual abuse. She deals with all of the ghosts, the worst being that of her mother and the memories of her harsh words of criticism. She lives alone by choice and justifies her decision on the basis of issues with trust. Her weekends are filled with making music with a group of women musicians. They nestle in for the weekend, each with their own instrument of choice and play into the wee hours of the night. Her summers are spent traveling, often stopping for an award presentation in recognition of her expertise or a guest appearance with a local orchestra.

The rest of the year she focuses on the musical needs of her special needs students. Her day is filled with songs and dances with a side trip or two to the school library. It is here she is finally able to read the children's books once inaccessible to her as a child.

The Prom Queen

> The chief qualities of a good Confession are three: it must be humble, sincere, and entire. *The Baltimore Catechism* (1941, p. 419)

My first meeting with The Prom Queen was in a clinical setting. She was an unwilling penitent. As she walked into my office, I was dazzled by her beauty that was partially hidden by the veil of hard living and disappointment. At 29, she had golden

tresses, blue eyes, porcelain skin, perfect white smile, and a voluptuous body. Her entrance was reserved and self-conscious. Her eyes darted around the waiting room and I observed physical release as she saw no one else was there. I escorted her into my office and assured her that no one would be in the office until five that afternoon. That would give us two uninterrupted hours for our first interview. She explained that she had been going through a difficult time and had just moved back into her parents' home. This hard time included the lifestyle of a bartender and accompanying issues with alcohol and depression. Parental concern had prompted the recent psycho-educational evaluation and the subsequent diagnosis of dyslexia. The Prom Queen had many questions about my research and was thrilled to find that it focused on adult women who were diagnosed late in life just as she had been. I explained the formalities of consent and offered to read the form to her or to let her take it home for a trusted other to read to her. She opted to give the form a cursory glance before signing and as she did, I summarized each section briefly to maintain her pride and to ensure that she understood the particulars of the project and her rights as a participant.

The Prom Queen remained nervous throughout our initial meeting. When asked about her memories of school, she shrugged, looked down and reported having few memories. Then her head popped up. "Well, in second grade I do remember, you know, the spelling bee, getting up in front of the class and the teacher was horrible because I misspelled tomato." When I asked for clarification she said, "Well, all the kids laughed because SHE WAS LAUGHING." I confirmed, "She laughed at you?" She confirmed the response. I asked her how she responded. She retorted, "Like I always do, I shut down, don't talk. It was terrifying." The dam was irreparably broken and her story spewed forth.

The Prom Queen negotiates text. The Prom Queen's experience with reading instruction was quite different than that of The Cellist and Lucy. As a student in elementary school in the 1980's, The Prom Queen experienced the influence of the whole language reading movement. According to Gaffney and Anderson (2000), whole language was at its peak between 1986 and 1996 but began waning in 1996. Even at its most popular, whole language defied definition by those who attempted to study it objectively (Stahl and Miller, 1989). Whole language is primarily a system of beliefs and intentions (Goodman, 1993). Goodman (1967) and Smith (1978) asserted that meaning and purpose should be the salient goals in early reading instruction. This view of reading was based on Goodman's (1967) assertion that there are three cueing systems of language that reside in the text. This model proposed that the three cueing systems needed to read were the graphophonic system, the semantic system, and the syntactic system. The graphophonic system provided visual and sound input. The syntactic system provided a linguistic structure and context in sentences. The semantic system transmitted meaning. This cueing system model is embedded in the rationale for whole language approaches to reading instruction.

Goodman (1967) expanded this psycholinguistic model of reading into what he interpreted as a psycholinguistic guessing game. Contrary to phonetic based models, Goodman asserted that efficient reading did not result from precise perception and identification of individual graphic elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce accurate guesses. The anticipation of that which has not been seen was an important component of this model.

This theoretical framework for reading predominated when The Prom Queen learned to read in the mid-1980s. Schools were ready to throw out basal readers, phonics workbooks, spelling programs, and other canned material so that teachers could create individualized reading instruction with authentic children's literature. A literature based program supported the a whole-part-whole constructivist stance contending the whole of any phenomenon cannot be broken into parts then added together while maintaining the essence of the whole. The Prom Queen explained that she relied on memorization as her only reading strategy:

> I just never understood the words and how to break it down. It was kind of a continuous thing for me, and not comprehending. Um, after I was a little bit older, I had a really hard time with chemistry because the words were very strange for me, and I didn't understand it. If it didn't have to do with anything that I could -- like history I could memorize all that. That was very easy for me. But anything else was very hard.

This was the first information gleaned from The Prom Queen regarding the specific nature of her negotiation of text. She revealed a word level struggle and suggested that she saw a relationship between word level difficulty and passage comprehension. When asked what would have been the kind of instruction that would have helped her be a better reader her response was simple. She responded, "Just, sounding out, you know, words, letters, going over the nouns."

When asked about oral reading, The Prom Queen's comments insinuated abandonment by teachers while facing terror, nerves, and desperation. She reflected some level of understanding for why she was abandoned. She knew they wanted her to do something, but she was unable to meet their expectations. The "shut down" phenomenon was alluded to in this exchanged. She predicted future situations like this one. She also formed expectations that teachers were not to be relied upon for help.

Ellen:	How was that when you were asked to read out loud?
The Prom Queen:	Terrifying. Well, I mean, I got very nervous, and of course I made It ten times worse, and you know, all the times I'd look up at the teacher for help and never got any.
Ellen:	What would you want her to do?
The Prom Queen:	Something. I never got a response. They wanted me to do it on my own, which I did understand, but help me sound it out or go through that process. I shut down.
Ellen:	What do you mean by that, you 'shut down'?
The Prom Queen:	Well, I was very embarrassed, and, you know, I thought, you know, all through school that's what it was going to be about, you know. In my head I didn't think teachers helped as much as they should've.

Although research has been completed on teacher-student interactions from a variety of perspectives (Cochran-Smith, 1984; Cohen, 1972; Grant & Rothenberg, 1986; O'Connor & Michaels, 1993), research is needed that connects these interactions with the literate identities of undiagnosed dyslexics. It is daunting to know that the words and actions of a teacher can have such a powerful impact on a student.

The Prom Queen negotiates family. The Prom Queen grew up in a middle class suburban neighborhood in a traditional family replete with the requisite mother, father, and one sister. When questioned about her family's knowledge of her reading difficulties, she took a particularly protective stance. She acknowledged that "my mom definitely knew something was wrong," but excused her lack of action because her teachers characterized her as, "a sweet kid." When probed as to how she knew that her mother had knowledge of her difficulties she explained that the signs were obvious:

> Probably just difficulty with homework. Um, I'd have to ask her that. Um, just like grades. She could tell in the reading classes they weren't very

> good. Um, the math wasn't good, because I felt – I used to kind of read the numbers backwards, so I really have to concentrate, especially when I'm doing the numbers. I'm not sure – at first my dad didn't know. I knew my mom did, and eventually my dad did.

From the earliest of reports it has been recognized that dyslexia often runs in families (Hallgren, 1950; Hinshelwood, 1917). Reading disabilities were often found in siblings and multiple generations of families. Recent investigations have confirmed the familial basis of dyslexia (Gilger, Pennington, & Defries, 1991).These studies show that a sibling of a dyslexic child has a 40 percent chance of having dyslexia and a parent of a dyslexic child has a 30 to 40 percent likelihood of having dyslexia (Pennington & Lefly, 2001).

I asked The Prom Queen if there was a history of dyslexia in her family. She revealed a probable occurrence, but she was guarded as to full disclosure of those affected. She became quite defensive when questioned regarding the possibility that her mother might be dyslexic.

Ellen:	Do you have any suspicions about other family members?
The Prom Queen:	I think my grandfather was.
Ellen:	Why do you think that?
The Prom Queen:	Just when we were kids reading books and stuff, he didn't know a lot of words. I don't know if that's dyslexia or the way he was in school, or I don't know.
Ellen:	This is your father's father?
The Prom Queen:	Mother's father.
Ellen:	Mother's father. But your mother doesn't have dyslexia?
The Prom Queen:	No. Oh no. Our parents read books and they can read a whole page forward and back. My sister can, too, and I'm always amazed by that, because I'm like, wow, how did you do that?

Ellen:	So, your maternal grandfather you think was dyslexic?
The Prom Queen:	I think.
Ellen:	Does your mother have any brothers or sisters?
The Prom Queen:	My mother has a sister.
Ellen:	Are there any issues? Does she have children?
The Prom Queen:	Yes. And they're straight A's.
Ellen:	No one else?
The Prom Queen:	My cousin, I don't think he had a learning disability, but there's something wrong with him.

After The Prom Queen was finally diagnosed with dyslexia, she harbored some unresolved resentment toward her parents. Osman (1997) suggests that the presence of a child with dyslexia in the family has a profound influence on family dynamics. This influence extends to the social and emotional development of siblings. There is increased likelihood of adverse familial effects when there are only two children, one of whom has a disabling condition and the children are the same sex and close in age. Such was the familial structure in The Prom Queen's family. Her sister, younger by one year, is the favored child, at least by the mother. While lacking, and often envying, the social status of The Prom Queen, the sister excelled academically. The focus on the sister's high academic achievement and denial of the under achievement of The Prom Queen reflected the need by parents to maintain an illusion of the family's honor.

The Prom Queen:	I was angry with my parents for a while, but I'm not any more. I was angry at everything once I found out.
Ellen:	You were angry at your parents for not knowing?
The Prom Queen:	Well, I think my mom always said that she knew something was wrong, but she would go to the teachers, and they would say, "No. She's so sweet. Don't worry about it." So, I think I didn't know that for the longest time.

Ellen:	That she had gone to the teachers?
The Prom Queen:	Yeah. So, --
Ellen:	She didn't talk to you about it?
The Prom Queen:	Yeah.
Ellen:	And you didn't talk to her about it?
The Prom Queen:	Right.
Ellen:	Why do you think that was the case?
The PromQueen:	I still don't know. It's just my personality. I just hold that stuff in. That's the way I am. I'm just like my father. My mom and my sister love to talk and all this stuff. I just don't want to do it. I mean, I talk, but not. I don't know.
Ellen:	So, did your dad ever intervene?
The Prom Queen:	Oh, no.
Ellen:	Would he go to the teachers with her?
The Prom Queen:	I'm sure he didn't, because he always worked late. Yeah. I mean, I know he did. Yeah.

The Prom Queen revealed conflict between her resistance to the stigma assigned to the position of dyslexic and the help disclosure would provide. She harbored resentment to all the adults who failed to come to her assistance in her early years. It is possible to blame the victim and interpret the desire to hide her identity as an unskilled readers as her own choice. The need to maintain the facade of proficient reader and to avoid stigma took precedence over the assertive act of asking for help. The performances that she needed to enact in order to hide, maintain, or promote a specific identity among her peers, teachers, or family members were more important than the actual reading act.

The Prom Queen negotiates stigma. The ways students identify themselves as readers, and the ways they want others to identify them, can influence their decisions related to expenditure of effort (Moje & Dillon, 2006). Performance-based classrooms encourage students to enact specific identities in order to be successful, and struggling

readers may not believe they can or should take on those identities. Leigh's (2006) study of the ways teachers transacted with students in relation to the reading task revealed that teacher behaviors were influenced by the teacher's perception of the student's cognitive strengths and weaknesses as a reader and how motivated the teacher thought the student was in trying to apply behaviors that might increase comprehension. The teachers described by The Prom Queen would express frustration when she did not comply with literacy rituals. She reported that teachers often incorrectly attributed her refusal to comply with their directions as laziness. The Prom Queen expressed keen awareness of when effort was put forth and when effort was withheld. When asked about her perception of what working hard meant she defined the process and motivation with great clarity. Her memories were equally intense as she recalled memories of not working hard.

The Prom Queen:	I know sixth grade, I remember trying really hard, not that I didn't anyways, but just really trying to understand everything. And I remember history I was always really good at because it was just memorization. I really liked our teacher.
Ellen:	How do you define working hard?
The Prom Queen:	Just putting in an extra couple of hours trying to understand it or asking somebody. I wouldn't do it very often, but I do remember in middle school -- I don't know if it was fifth grade or when it was, but just trying.
Ellen:	Were there times you didn't work hard?
The Prom Queen:	I'm sure. Oh yeah. Definitely. I just gave up. People gave up on me, so…

There is a research void relative to the metacognitive processes and expenditure of effort of dyslexics during oral and silent reading, There are, however, some insights to be gained from research focused on the generic label of struggling reader. Hall (2009) admitted that little is known about how struggling readers make decisions about

classroom reading tasks. Some researchers related struggling readers' decisions to low motivation, poor self-efficacy, or limited cognitive abilities (Guthrie & Davis, 2003). This framework blamed the victim and suggested that if they developed the appropriate cognitive skills and experienced an increase in motivation and self-efficacy, then they would make more positive decisions about reading and likely improve their abilities.

Organizing reading instruction through ability grouping reinforced this escalating marginalization of the undiagnosed dyslexic. As earlier noted, once a child is assigned to a low group the chances of moving to a high group are very low (Hiebert 1983). The Prom Queen illustrated the stigma that resulted from ability grouping and how she negotiated the subsequent public shaming. She gave a detailed account of how she negotiated the context of round robin reading.

The Prom Queen:	I'm not sure, but I think that triggered my first ever anxiety attack.
Ellen:	How did you negotiate the inevitable?
The Prom Queen:	I counted the number of students who would read before my turn. I tried to predict which sentences would be mine, and I read and re-read it. I invented other avoidance techniques that I would rely on for years.
Ellen:	Could you describe those techniques?
The Prom Queen:	I ducked down to tie my shoes. I needed to sharpen my pencil. I went to the bathroom. Sometimes as my turn approached I would get physically sick and leave to see the nurse.
Ellen:	Did the teacher ever catch on?
The Prom Queen:	I don't know. She never called on me.

Like many undiagnosed dyslexic readers, The Prom Queen became positioned as a resistant reader. Brozo (2000) explains how resistant readers hide out in secondary school classrooms. Undiagnosed dyslexics, through the marginalizing labels we place

upon them, are often set up to become resistant to reading (Alvermann, 2001). The downward spiral of the undiagnosed dyslexic is exacerbated by teachers making assumptions about students who demonstrate difficulty learning to read. These assumptions may influence the ways in which they interact with these students. As Alvermann (2001) states, “Culture constructs disability, as well as ability” (p. 677). The consequences of being labeled as disabled in any way are great for a student, and understanding how teacher-student interactions contribute to identity formation is essential to the development of more effective intervention strategies for these students.

The Prom Queen negotiates peers. The Prom Queen was faced with the renegotiation of multiple positions as she entered middle school. Her difficulty with reading and her concomitant academic struggles quickly take a backseat to her social concerns. The Prom Queen relished and capitalized on her growing privileged position outside the classroom and was intent on maintaining her position by using connections with other privileged peers (Bourdieu, 1983). Alexander-Passe (2008) reported that dyslexic girls are more affected by social interactions at school which resulted in higher stress from peer and teacher interactions. The importance of maintaining her privileged social position is evident in this exchange.

Ellen:	How were your grades?
The Prom Queen:	I think they were average, to be honest. I don't know off the top of my head. There might’ve been a bad grade in one subject, but I think they were -- I don't know. Probably Cs.
Ellen:	Were you concerned about them
The Prom Queen:	It wasn’t my top thing that was on my mind.
Ellen:	What was on your mind?
The Prom Queen:	Going to middle school. Just meeting boys, cheering, and that kind of stuff. I think fifth grade is

when you start to realize that you're - you need to start doing more stuff.

Ellen: It sounds like you were confident in your social position. You didn't have to be anxious about that aspect of your life.

The Prom Queen: Yes! That was nice.

I further explored her reaction to the transition to middle school as we discussed the dichotomy of freedom versus isolation in the expanding social milieu. She perceived the change as beneficial.

The Prom Queen: I think it helped me. Because it kind of relieved some of my anxiety or stress.

Ellen: Why was that?

The Prom Queen: Just because it was something fun instead of always being serious and always trying to figure a way out. It was something fun for me.

Her biggest concern circulated around assignment to classes and association with the correct peer group. Students going into sixth grade were assigned to one of two Pods. The Prom Queen explained the source of her anxiety:

> And I know that everybody was wanting to be on one pod, the popular kids all want to be on the same side, because they could eat all together. I do remember that.

Her first social hurdle was easily clear as all the "popular kids," including The Prom Queen, were assigned to Pod 1. This hurdle was critical "because the same pod does everything together, any activities, everything like that."

Those activities that everybody was "doing together" included excesses with alcohol, drugs, and sex. The Prom Queen had long since forgotten the pain associated with her undiagnosed dyslexia in elementary school. The pages of her yearbook are filled with words of adulation and veiled jealously from both peers and teachers. The pain may

be a distant memory, but the reality of her reading disability was destined to rear its ugly head in the very near future.

The Rest of The Prom Queen's story. The Prom Queen was so named because she ultimately became her high school Prom Queen and an annual member of the homecoming count (except for one year when her votes were stolen). She still lives at home and continues to deal with issues surrounding alcohol and depression. She had two unsuccessful attempts at attending college, but the state mandated reading exam kept her from proceeding past her sophomore year. Her bedroom is decorated with artifacts of her gloried high school years. Stacks of yearbooks line her shelves with pages marked that reflect her accomplishments. She is happy "reading her magazines" and has yet to venture into the unknown territory of reading a book. Her literacy experiences have expanded to the creation of a Facebook page and limited use of email.

She works as a waitress at a restaurant and bar near her home. She shared with her bosses the nature of her dyslexia. With the help of her supervisor, she uses her strong memory skills to memorize the standard menu and any daily changes. Orders are committed to memory as well and repeated verbatim to the cook staff. This is just a brief stop on her journey to becoming an interior designer, just like Lucy. Perhaps she will experience the same satisfaction and be able to reflect on her life as being "a blast."

Passing as Literate

> "I'm a university graduate," I began, "with a bachelor's degree in education and business administration and over 90 additional graduate units. I attended school for 35 years, half of them as a professional educator. In acquiring these experiences, I could not read a textbook or write the answer to an essay question. This is the first public acknowledgment that I have ever made, that I have been a functional illiterate for almost 50 years." John Corcoran, Speech Delivered October 1987

For John Corcoran, performing literacy required extensive interpersonal political maneuvering, and impression management. McDermott and Varenne (1995) referred to this process as “passing” as literate. McCarthey (2001) demonstrated how students’ perceptions of literacy abilities as well as their sense of the perceptions held by their parents and teachers of those same abilities influenced their broader sense of self. As previously noted, high status is often accorded to the position of proficient reader in the western world and literacy has often been used to distinguish the elite within a society. Literacy skills place individuals into hierarchical positions within society (Compton-Lilly, 2007). These positions are indicators of relative levels of social reading capital. The elite group is privileged with the ability to recognize, access, and utilize social relationships that support the reader. These social networks provide access to social, economic, and political power. These obvious advantages instill in the dyslexic reader the desire to be perceived as a “good reader.” To attain this aspirational position requires a complex management system rife with diversionary tactics. The Cellist summarized this complexity of social positioning in simple terms: “Well, also, you know, you have this whole thing, and -- in school that says, you know, smart is good. Dumb is bad. And reading seems to be that determiner.”

Goffman (1959) also contended that most people select fronts that are considered socially acceptable and represents aspects of an ideal identity. Goffman referred to “passing” and “management” activities as the means by which fronts are maintained. Individuals attempting to pass as having a particular identity, manage the contexts around them and construct elaborate scenes that provide support to the front identity. One

problem for the undiagnosed dyslexic reader is that maintaining the front may take up so much energy that there is little opportunity to make the task one's own.

While some identities are often unconsciously reproduced, others are the result of a conscious practice of figuring the world. This process can be accomplished through the expert use of cultural tools. Once aware of one's position, the individual may choose to remediate and in doing so, create other ways in which to be positioned. Bakhtin (1981) views this act as a manifestation of agency. Like The Cellist, dyslexic pupils are likely to be aware that the position of "good reader" is valued by their culture and peers (Pollard and Filer, 1999) and that diversionary tactics must be used to create and protect their literacy position. To achieve the position of "good reader," Lucy, The Cellist, and The Prom Queen all demonstrated expert use of cultural tools to sustain a presentation of themselves as being more competent readers than they really were and to pass as literate. In my analysis of the data, I identified three themes related to the ways in which the research participants attempted to pass as literate. These included performances that hide, performances that deceive and performances that leverage learning strengths.

Lucy Passes

Lucy avoided disclosure when I asked her if her peers knew she was dyslexic. She answered abruptly but then followed up with a diversionary anecdote. Her body language disclosed discomfort with this topic and she used the anecdote to diffuse her angst:

> Never came up socially. It really came up when I got a job in a bank and I was in the check clearing department and I had to take a stack of checks and then there would be a tape around it that had $1.49, $1.83, $10.42 and I'd transpose every six and nine on there and I could never make the totals match. And when my supervisor looked at it she finally said, "Lucy, you can't work here anymore." And I said, "Why not? I show up on time, I do my job." She said, "You don't know a six from a nine." Every time I do that (arm gesture to left) I tell you to turn right. Right to this day. Turn left

> (arm gesture right) right over there. I mean the other left. And I always catch myself.

For Lucy, there was never any need for her dyslexia to come up socially. Lucy summarized her negotiation of dyslexia and leveraging her learning strengths as "just having to deal with the fact that my brain was backwards or something. But something was always the key word -- because I had skills! I mean, I could do! I was functioning." Lucy was accepted at an art institute and was ultimately awarded a scholarship. Once enrolled, she was determined to do well. This was her first opportunity to bring her dream of being an interior designer to fruition. She revealed her tenacity as her greatest learning strength. Her love of psychology and sociology had provided motivation for developing learning strategies to compensate for her inability to read. She paid a girl in her literature class to read her assignments orally to her each night. When asked about additional strategies, Lucy explained her reliance on peer discourse.

> Lucy: Well, I would just say, "Talk to me." Talk to me, tell me everything you know, talk to me.
>
> Ellen: Who would you ask?
>
> Lucy: Whoever had a subject that I didn't know about. Somebody in my class or a friend would bring up a subject and I'll go, "I don't know anything about that, tell me about it." And they would and I would just remember it.

Lucy's academic challenge increased significantly when left to her own devices in testing situations. She explains an elaborate system required to learn just one vocabulary word. The testing format she describes is open response. She is given the word *architrave* and she must provide a written definition.

> Lucy: I had to recognize "architrave" and then I had memorized what it was. I memorized it.
>
> Ellen: How did you recognize that it was "architrave"?
>
> Lucy: 'Cause I had a book to look at it.

Ellen: Did you memorize the letters? Or the shape?

Lucy: I -- the upper part of the building. When it said "architrave," and it said the upper part of a building, then I'd have a picture in front of me, and I could see the architrave.

Ellen: But the word itself, how did you recognize it?

Lucy: I don't know. I probably -- because I said so many times.

Ellen: You could pick it out of a group of other words.

Lucy: Mmhmm.

Ellen: And do you have any idea if you had any strategies other than just looking at it –

Lucy: No, I just kept saying it over and over and over and over and over -

Ellen: And looking at it while you did it.

Lucy: -- over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over.

Ellen: Did you visualize it as you said it over and over, or did you look at it as you said it over and over and over.

Lucy: Well, I would read it to myself first --

Ellen: Looking at it --

Lucy: -- looking at it, reading the words --And then, I would see it visually. And then I could say "architrave: upper part of the pediment of a building; upper part of the pediment of a building; upper part of the pediment of a building; architrave, architrave, architrave."

Ellen: Let's say you looked at a blank slate, could you see the word architrave, could you visualize the word architrave?

Lucy: Mmhmm. Well I could hear it.

Ellen: You could hear it --

Lucy: Yeah.

Ellen: -- and you could see it.

Lucy: Right.

Ellen: Was it spelled correctly when you could see it?

Lucy: I have no idea. I do not have a clue.

Ellen: But it was enough for you to be able to recognize it when you saw it in print. And when you visualized the word, did you also visualize the picture of the architrave?

Lucy: Yes!

Ellen: Was one superimposed on top of the other? Or were they side by side

Lucy: They were separate.

Ellen: OK. So once it's in your memory, you've got it.

Lucy: Mmhm. Like that liberty or death speech.

Ellen: Yes.

Lucy: Like saying -- the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag in Spanish! How many times have I had to call on that information?

Ellen: (laughs) I'm not sure! How many times?

Lucy: Well, do you usually pledge to an American flag in a foreign language?

Ellen: (laughs) I don't know how you learned it in the first place!

Lucy: "Prometo fidelidad a la bandera de los Estados Unidos de América, y a la República que representa, una sola nación, baja de Dios, con indivisible, y justicia para todos."

Ellen: There it is.

Lucy: I have no clue how I can do that! I don't understand it. If you gave it to me in Spanish right now, I couldn't read it.

Ellen: You couldn't read it. But you heard it --

Lucy: But I heard it enough.

Ellen: And seeing the symbol for architrave -- you saw the symbolic language and the actual concrete symbol -- you're using visual memory skills when you do that. So your visual memory is strong, your auditory memory is strong, both of those are real strengths.

Lucy: Do you know I -- you're saying this, but when -- all along people have asked me, "Well if you can't read, how do you learn?" And I always say, "Through my eyes and my ears." And I knew that, but I didn't realize --But I mean, I knew that if I saw something, that I had it, and if I heard it -- read that to me, and I'll read it back to you. It's repetition. It's repetition, to me. Um, when *Dead Poets' Society* came out 15, 20 years ago, um, there was a bunch of us who hung around, and we decided each one of us would pick a poem and we would memorize it. And then we would come back and get together and discuss it. I picked "The Raven." One of the most difficult poems ever written. But I found the rhyme in it. When you read it the first time, it doesn't rhyme. But it does. It does have a rhyme. And once I found the rhyme, then memorizing the words were a lot easier. And I went on a vacation and my little cousin, he was about ten, and a little genius, my brother's a genius,

um, sat there in the mornings, and I'd drink coffee, and he would read me a sentence. And I'd say it back to him. And then we'd get the whole verse. And he'd say, "Okay now, sis, do the verse back." And I'd go, "OK. 'Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary, / Over some quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore, / While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a rapping, / As if someone gently tapping, tapping at my chamber door. / "Must be some visitor," I muttered, 'Only this, and nothing more.' See there was rhyme all the way through there. 'Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in a bleak December, / And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost across the floor.' What comes next? See, what comes next? Lost the rhyme. But by now the raven is at his window. 'So open wide, I flung the shutter, then with many a flirt and a flutter, / In stepped a raven of the ancient days of yore. / Not the least obeisance made he; not a moment stopped nor stayed he, / But with mein of lord or lady perched above my chamber door - / Perched on the bust of Pallas just above my chamber door - / Perched, and sat, and nothing more.' Now I don't even know what the word "obeisance" means. Nor could I possibly spell it. But I can -- and I only -- of the 17 verses, I only made it through 12, and I lost interest. I used to keep a tape in my car. And when I'd go to work, or take a trip, play a verse, push it back, play a verse, push it back. Turn it off, say it. Just constant repetition.

Lucy: I would not go to bed until I would make an A on the project the next day.

Ellen: What changed?

Lucy: I was motivated.

Ellen: Why?

Lucy: Because it wasn't something my mother and father were telling me I had to do. It was something I had chosen to do. And I was 30 years old, I was an adult.

Ellen: I see.

Lucy: And not an 18 year old who knew it all. I was a know-it-all. Don't tell me what to do. Brat. Not spoiled, just a brat.

Ellen: But you knew what you wanted.

Lucy: Defiant.

Ellen: You knew what you wanted --

Lucy: And I wanted to study interior design.

Ellen: -- and you wanted to go after it!

Lucy: I turned in a color theory project and I stayed up most of the night and I got a B on it. Uh-oh!

Ellen: Why'd you get a B?

Lucy: Because it wasn't perfect.

Ellen: How was it not perfect?

Lucy: Well, you -- you had to -- I didn't take the amount of time required to make it perfect. And so I went home and I did it again. And I worked on it until it was perfect. And I turned it in, and she said, "Well Lucy, your work is perfect, but you're a day late, and I'm gonna have to give you a B."And I looked at her and I said, "That's fine." You said the key word –

Ellen: Were you upset?

Lucy: I said, "I don't care what the number is, I did it right, it is perfect, I know it, you just said it ---- give me an F, I don't care!"

Ellen: Did you ever get another B?

Lucy: Rarely, if ever, did I ever get a B in interior design. I asked Lucy if she had regrets that it took her until she was 30 years old before she could capitalize on her hidden learning strengths. She lamented, "So I guess the long and the short of it is I wish kids today could be, you know, diagnosed, especially if they're dyslexic, so they're not sent to speed reading classes, so that they're not being made to feel like they're dumb because they can't get through the curricula as presented. Perhaps it can be presented in a different manner. Because it is what it is in your mind, whether it's straight or backwards. I don't think they've invented any magic pills and I have gotten through my life on my own and there's something to be said for me doing something right. Regardless of how I got here I made it. I'm a survivor."

In order to be a survivor, Lucy used extraordinary means to achieve her goals. As a "visual-spatial learner" Lucy could see the big picture, but had difficulty with regular step-by-step learning. Lucy opted for nontraditional learning techniques that incorporated high levels of repetition and oral reading of texts. Her greatest strategy was tenacity of purpose. She never gave up.

The Cellist Passes

The Cellist also used her keen auditory skills and memory to her advantage. Her first access to text, while serendipitous, still provided the preview necessary for later discourse. She explains that she "got to be a really good listener and a good rememberer." She recalls how she leveraged these skills in reading group by using the oral readings of the prior two groups as preparation for her performance.

The Cellist:	I remember, there was one where Tim, Sally's little stuffed bear,got caught in the car -- was left in the car. When the car went up on a, a jack, a lift. Up, up, up. And I remember being so excited because that reading group had read that story and they thought it was so wonderful. And then the next group got to read that story, and we -- it was so wonderful -- and, you know, we were going to get to do it.
Ellen:	And did you?
The Cellist:	Yes, we did. Up, up, up.
Ellen:	And did you listen while the other groups read aloud?
The Cellist:	Ah, I certainly did. Forget doing our math.
Ellen:	So you heard the words --
The Cellist:	You know what, I did hear the words.
Ellen:	And that was helpful?
The Cellist:	Mm-hmm. I'm sure it was. I did not realize that. Yes, I did listen.
Ellen:	OK. So you'd really heard it two times before you actually had to read it yourself. Was this every time? Did the first two groups always come before your group?
The Cellist:	Well, I must -- they also probably did it several weeks before we did it
Ellen:	You had still heard the story.
The Cellist:	And they -- I remember a little girl talking about it at recess, how it was so funny, that, you know, Tim went up, up, up in the car.
Ellen:	Really interesting. You took advantage of their learning to prepare yourself for your own reading group.
The Cellist:	You're right.

The role of schema-based prior knowledge in acquiring comprehension skills is an important issue. With The Cellist's lack of automatic word-decoding skills, prior knowledge of a text's content provides the only access to her success with comprehension. Where a skilled reader might experience success with unfamiliar texts, the undiagnosed dyslexic demonstrates difficulty. Thus, The Cellist found a way to use prior knowledge to compensate for poor decoding skills. Reading groups stopped and The Cellist had to find another way "to be invisible, to not stick out." The Cellist's skill at deception escalated as she employed cheating techniques to maintain her position of "good student,"

> The Cellist: Well, I -- well, actually I'm just going to tell you that the reason -- because third grade was the very first teacher I felt she loved me, and I wanted to do well for her and I remember I wanted her to continue liking me, and I didn't want her to figure out how -- the stuff I didn't get.
>
> Ellen: You worked hard to keep that from her that year?
>
> The Cellist: Yes, I did. I worked very hard. And I compromised my own self-image to do that. We had these little desks so you could prop up so it could have a flat surface or a slanted surface, and I would always have the spelling words right there, and I'd sit back, and -- I can't believe she never caught me once the whole year, but she didn't.
>
> Ellen: You made 100s for every spelling test?
>
> The Cellist: Mm-hmm.

The Cellist's motivation for passing as literate revolved around the need to be liked and accepted by her peers and significant adults. She admitted to compromising her values and ethics in order to maintain a position of "looking smart" so as not to lose the acceptance and love of the first teacher who had loved her.

Middle School brought more sophisticated ways of passing. With two college educated parents, The Cellist came to the classroom with extensive funds of knowledge

about the world and how it works. *Funds of knowledge* is defined by Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (2001) "as the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p. 133). In order to "look smart" The Cellist would make a preemptive strike and ask a "really good question" about some part of the day's lesson about which she had previous knowledge. In doing so she appeared knowledgeable of and engaged in the assignment. The result was freedom from future questioning regarding unfamiliar text and maintenance of reading capital (Lilly-Compton,2007). The Cellist used this technique all the way through college and in doing so avoided the necessity of ever having to read a book.

Institutionalized reading capital (Compton-Lilly, 2007) can be conceptualized as the tangible artifacts that are recognized as evidence of reading proficiency. For The Cellist, attainment of these artifacts presented a moral and ethical dilemma. Acquiring institutionally sanctioned proficiency benchmarks, such as grades on spelling tests, required the enactment of performances that deceived parents, teachers and peers. The Cellist reported that she cheated all the way through third grade and admitted feeling terrible about the act itself. The loss of the admiration of significant others and peers would have proven much more painful.

The Prom Queen Passes

At its most basic level, passing is a conscious decision to manage identity-related information in a particular context to elicit a specific outcome. Passing also has two other characteristics: (a) It produces a dissonance response because the identity presented through passing conflicts with other identities enacted by the self, and (b) its goal is to

project one's conformity with specific characteristics that are dominant or expected in the particular social context **(**DeJordy, 2008**).** The Prom Queen expressed terror of the potential stigma that would be attached to disclosing the fact that she has difficulty reading. She would rather engage in diversionary tactics and not disclose her secret than to face misunderstanding or underestimation of her potential:

> I think when I was in elementary school I didn't want anyone to think I was different. You know, I didn't want them to think I had a learning problem. Um, I was terrified -- I don't know if they still call it Special Ed -- because kids were made fun of in Special Ed. You know, as I got older, I probably should've been in Special Ed, but back then I was terrified of that.

The Prom Queen was open in her disclosure of cheating as a means to avoid being stigmatized by her peers. She admitted to proficiency in this means of deception. In addition, she reported a sophisticated moral paradigm that provided a sanctioned structure for her deception. Cheating methods varied but those from whom she covertly obtained information must adhere to strict qualifications. She also revealed that she possessed the ability to identify her partners in crime:

The Prom Queen:	Um, I'm trying to think back. It's so hard. And I knew how to cheat.
Ellen:	How did that happen, that you knew how to cheat? Did someone tell you?
The Prom Queen:	I think I saw some kids doing it, and I think I just caught on.
Ellen:	What were they doing?
The Prom Queen:	Just looking at someone else's paper. Because our desks were very close together, so it was very easy to kind of put your eyes, you know. I was very good at cheating. Yes. I was very good at that.
Ellen:	So, what were some of the ways that you would cheat?
The Prom Queen:	Well, it sounds cliché, but I would look on someone's paper or go up to a teacher's test and

seeing the test right there, just asking very stupid questions to see the paper. We had a French teacher, and that was even harder for me, another language. But she wasn'tvery -- she was an old lady, and she wasn't very, uh, attentive, I guess you could say. And she would leave the test right on the desk, and kids would just go up and get them -- the answers.

Ellen: She would leave the answers to the test you were about to have?

The Prom Queen: Right. Mm-hmm. And she never noticed that all the students would go get the answers and put them on right next to their paper.

Ellen: So, you weren't the only one doing this?

The Prom Queen: Well, you could -- I could just know when someone was cheating or if they were trying, being very quiet in the class, not being very focused, I guess you could say.

Ellen: That's interesting. So, you felt -- you felt as though you weren't alone, but there was never any communication?

The Prom Queen: Right. Yes. Never. There's a -- most people don't want anyone to know their plots. Or at least that's how I saw it. So. I mean, I never got caught, you know, um, you know it made me feel even worse just 'cause I didn't want to do that but, you know…

Ellen: But, why did you continue to do it then when it made you feel worse?

The Prom Queen: Because I didn't want a bad grade, because teachers would know, mom and dad would know, friends would know, that just seemed a lot worse to me in my head.

The Prom Queen set specific ethical boundaries on dealing with a culturally unacceptable behavior. She drew the line when cheating involved putting her friends at risk. She also reveals a belief that the smart kids who were outside her peer group deserved her wandering eyes.

Ellen: Do you remember the first time you cheated?

The Prom Queen: No. Maybe fifth or sixth grade. I have no idea.

Ellen:	So, it was the act of looking at someone else's paper and actually taking their answer?
The Prom Queen:	Right.
Ellen:	What was your reaction to that?
The Prom Queen:	At first I felt really awful. I never would cheat off my friend's paper. It was always a very smart person who would sit next to me or something.
Ellen:	But you said your friends are very smart, though.
The Prom Queen:	Right.
Ellen:	But you wouldn't cheat off of them?
The Prom Queen:	No.
Ellen:	Why is that?
The Prom Queen:	I don't know. I think it would've made me feel a little worse. I think the smart kids didn't deserve better from -- you know
Ellen:	So, explain to me the difference in what you're talking about as the smart kids and the kids -- your friends that were also smart.
The Prom Queen:	Well, they were my friends. That's the difference.
Ellen:	OK.
The Prom Queen:	The thing was that they were just my friends.
Ellen:	Were the other smart kids running in a different peer group?
The Prom Queen:	They were probably outside of my circle.
Ellen:	It sounds like you were into traditional popular kinds of things. You were a cheerleader, went to parties, and then many were smart on top of that. You had the total package in your friendship group.
The Prom Queen:	Right.
Ellen:	OK. And then you've got another group of people who are smart but maybe aren't as socially gifted.
The Prom Queen:	Right. I think that's everywhere.
Ellen:	Oh yes. Absolutely. It is everywhere.
The Prom Queen:	Yeah but I was also -- I don't know. How old are you in sixth grade?
Ellen:	11, 12.

The Prom Queen:	Yeah. I was also that age. I wasn't -- still wanted to be with my friends. That was the most important thing.
Ellen:	And you made it through high school?
The Prom Queen:	With a 3.0.

Limitations to cheating were also drawn when it came time for The Prom Queen to take standardized tests such as The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). The mandate for administering the ITBS was under-enforced and as such allowed the use of diversionary tactics: "Yeah. I remember I faked being sick not to go in one day for one of the parts. I remember that, because I did not want to, um. So, those kinds of tests you can't really cheat."

The decision to forgo cheating on the SAT was explained as a desire to measure her true ability. There seems to be an underlying fear of being caught for the first time in a high risk setting. The fact that she discovered that all tests were different also figured into her decision. When she falsified her scores to her peers, she also imposed the ethical barrier of not excessively inflating her actual score.

Ellen:	What about your SATs?
The Prom Queen:	Gosh. I don't -- that's a -- I promised myself that I was not going to cheat, because I figured if I did cheat that day I was going to get caught.
Ellen:	But you thought about cheating?
The Prom Queen:	Yes. But then I found out every test is different. I do not off the top of my head remember my score. It was close -- a little below average, I think.
Ellen:	But you did it yourself?
The Prom Queen:	Yes.
Ellen:	Completely?
The Prom Queen:	Mm-hmm.
Ellen:	How was that experience?

The Prom Queen: I really didn't want to open it when it came in the mail, I didn't want to know. I really didn't. So. You know, all my friends were, "Oh, I got 1200," or whatever it was. I knew mine wasn't going to be up there.

Ellen: Did you tell them?

The Prom Queen: Yes. Just a little bit higher than what it was. To be in the ballpark. I mean, I didn't go overboard. I never went overboard. Never.

Ellen: Why did you make the decision not to cheat on your SATs –

The Prom Queen: I think maybe to see how good I was -- how good I was maybe. Um, kind of in the back of my head, I had been cheating for so long. I was like, I'm going to get caught one day and kicked out from school or something like that, and I didn't want that to happen.

The Prom Queen further explained her diversionary strategies as she discussed participation in literacy practices with her closest friends. These processes of written and oral production and interpretation of texts provided students with opportunities to create relationships with other classmates (Sperling, 1995) and negotiate their sense of themselves as gendered, raced and classed beings (Dyson, 1995; Finders, 1997). Through these identity negotiations they articulated their life goals and interests (Hull & Schultz, 2001), as well as stake out allegiances within larger social groups or discourse communities (Gee, 1996). The Prom Queen had limited access to these literacy processes. When asked about peer group participation in reading and writing in yearbooks or reading and writing diaries, her memories are vivid:

> No. I stayed away from anything I could with that. They all wrote in diaries. I never did. We just talked about boys and watched movies. I never, um, tried to do anything that would show that I couldn't do it. I always wanted to do that, um, but it was just too much. I just knew that there was something wrong with me. I just didn't know what or how to deal with it.

One of the best places to observe adolescents is on the pages of the middle and high school yearbook. The Prom Queen and I spent several afternoons looking through her yearbooks and discussing past and present peer relationships. One afternoon I explained that we were going to focus on fifth, sixth, and seventh grades, and that I was going to ask her to go back, and see if the pictures might activate memories. We started with the faces and many had been highlighted. Katie's face and name kept appearing. I focused on school-related activities with Katie.

The Prom Queen:	I met my best friend [Katie] first day of fourth grade, and I remember cheating off of, um, the girl next to her. So, I kept thinking, I hope Katie can't see me. It's a shame that most kids just want to fit in, and there's not much pressure to do good in school any more.
Ellen:	What is the biggest pressure?
The Prom Queen:	Fitting in.
Ellen:	Would you and Katie study together?
The Prom Queen:	Yeah. We'd all study together, but there was more a group discussion type of thing, and that was something I could do better.

The study group would typically take place at one friend's house. The girls would all study together in the friend's living room with all of the requisite books and study materials assembled on the coffee table. At this point the group would discuss the homework or the current book, an activity that was a lifeline for The Prom Queen. She "could understand better what was going on." She also acknowledged the purposefulness of this nightly ritual. "I didn't know at the time, but I guess I used them." I tried to assuage her obvious guilt by pointing out that many girls study together and each girl gained information from the others. The idea of using her friends as a tool to help her gain information seemed to broach the unwritten code of adolescent friendship.

Our conversation turned to another friend, Jennifer. Of the two, Jennifer had an easier time in school. She was also a star athlete. I asked The Prom Queen if there was any jealously in the relationship.

The Prom Queen:	No. I just didn't understand why I wasn't like that.
Ellen:	What would "like that" be? Tell me what that is.
The Prom Queen:	Where I just looked at it a couple of times or -- and then got it, and that was it.
Ellen:	And you never mentioned it to anyone?
The Prom Queen:	No.
Ellen:	So, you're studying with these two girls who are having a very easy time in school and making straight A's. But you are the "man magnet" as it says in your yearbook. I would imagine they envied you.
The Prom Queen:	Mm-hmm. That was -- you know, I grew up being jealous of all these smart people. It's nice to have something –
Ellen:	Here you are, you continue to be beautiful and smart, you keep talking about these smart people. It's not smart, though, is it that was the issue? So, you know, that's -- there's a big difference between being smart and intelligent and having a reading disability, being dyslexic. Because you know in certain situations you could acquire information.
The Prom Queen:	I was good in history. I mean, I personally feel history is all memorization, and if I could listen to the lecture and understand it, would just memorize that. I wouldn't read the book, but the lecture was going on. I understood it.

The reactions of the undiagnosed dyslexic are often contingent upon the context of the classroom and pedagogical choices of the teacher. Both can influence how the undiagnosed dyslexic reader experiences literacy events. The teacher's interaction with students through their lesson structure, questioning patterns, and general talk with their students can influence student participation in literacy events (Cazden, 1986). This

interaction can occur as a process of transmission or as a process of transaction. The lecture format described byThe Prom Queen is a transmissional stance. It is often referred to as banking pedagogy (Freire, 1970). From this stance, the instructor assumes the position of the depositor of information and learners are viewed as an empty vessel ready to be filled by the information imparted to them. Transmission implies that learning is transmitted from the teacher to the student. The teacher first delivers information and later determines the success of the transmission by employing formalized measures of assessment. For The Prom Queen, this transmission of knowledge is her first access to the body of text and provides a pool of knowledge for future discourse in her homework group.

The homework group promoted a different opportunity in that learning was dialogical. The Prom Queen could assume the dual roles of learner and teacher. The Prom Queen constructed and co-constructed knowledge through these social interactions. This process would be impossible for The Prom Queen without the primary transmission of knowledge from the instructor.

Summary of Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the negotiation of identities by undiagnosed dyslexic adolescent girls through case study analysis of adult dyslexic women whose initial diagnosis of dyslexia did not occur until after high school. To explain this phenomenon, I explored the complexity of dyslexia as well as the theoretical underpinnings of identity construction, adolescence and “passing as literate.” Informed by the framework of poststructural theory, I examined how my subjects perceived their worlds and how they negotiated peers, assets, limitations, and behaviors. As they

revealed their positions in their figured worlds, I searched for issues of power, identity and agency around which their lives became organized.

The answers to the following research questions were sought: “How do adult women who were undiagnosed dyslexic girls reflect upon their negotiations of identity in the figured world of school?” (2) Is there evidence that they use attempts of passing as literate? If so, what types of “passing” attempts and techniques were used by dyslexic adolescent girls to appear more literate and cross from the position of peripheral participant in the figured world of school into that of a position of expert (Lave & Wagner, 1991)? The case study methodology offered the opportunity for the insight provided by detailed narratives of personal experiences. Data were collected by interviews, observations, and researcher’s field notes. The data were analyzed for affirming or conflicting themes and intergenerational connectedness. The stories were then retold in a chronological pattern describing the participants’ experiences from as many perspectives as possible.

As a result of this process the follow findings were observed relative to three undiagnosed dyslexic females:

1. Variations in negotiation of text were influenced by the reading program currently in vogue, the learning style of the participants, and the pedagogical decisions of the teacher.
2. Discussions and oral presentations, in multiple contexts, provided the necessary intellectual scaffold to access and make meaning of text.

3. Expenditure of effort while engaging in literacy tasks was variable and was contingent upon the perceived value of the task and the individual requesting engagement.
4. Performances enacted to establish an aspirational literacy identity took precedence over actual literacy tasks.
5. Incidents of literacy shaming were common among participants, but the form and reactions to literacy shaming were variable.
6. Identity performances required to "pass as literate" included engagement in (a) performances that hide; (b) performances that deceive; and (c) performances that use learning strengths.
7. Disparity between cognitive abilities and academic performance resulted in conflicting identities.

School is a social context that provides the social dynamics of the world within which students learn and construct their learner identities (Lave & Wenger, 1998). The participants' figured worlds of school were ''socially and culturally constructed realm[s] of interpretation in which particular characters and actors were recognized, significance assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes valued over others (Holland et al., 1998, p. 52)." The participants in this study disclosed the positions that were culturally imposed as well as those that were chosen. Some of these positions required conventional or stereotypical performances. The participants told of instances in which they were denied entry into some figured worlds based on their social rank or position influenced by their dyslexia. They also told of times when they denied entry to a figured world to those tey deemed unqualified or unworthy outsiders. They told of culture-specific story lines that

were exemplified by roles such as student, daughter, sister, or athlete. They revealed their views of the world from the vantage point of each position, at that moment, and in terms of the images, metaphors, stories and concepts that were relevant to the discursive practices in which they were positioned.

Identity labels can be used to stereotype, privilege, or marginalize readers and writers as “struggling “or “proficient,” as “creative” or “deviant” (Lin, 2008). The institution in which one learns to read relies heavily on identities that take the form of progress indicators. These identity labels can be especially powerful in an individual’s life. Words, texts and the literate practices that accompany these labels not only reflect but may also produce the self (Davies, 2003).

The three participants demonstrated reactions to the stress created as a result of the demands of the classroom. All reported incidents of literacy shaming related to oral reading. The participants told stories of elaborate strategies that they used to avoid the stigma associated with reading orally to maintain their social capital. Relegation to the lowest reading group was a devastating experience for all the participants. The participants’ experiences with ability grouping added to their growing cognitive dissonance.

Social capital is inherent in the structure of the participants’ relations between and among actors in and out of school. Lucy was quick to explain the benefits that her natural leadership abilities, interpersonal skills, and linguistic facility provide. Her social abilities expanded her social capital (Bourdieu, 1998; Field, 2003; Coleman, 1988) enough to warrant her recruitment and repositioning (Holland et al., 1998) into the center of the school’s social context despite her reading difficulties.

The Cellist reached the pinnacle of her social capital as she reigned as a “lady in waiting” in the realm of the playground. However, The Cellist’s privileged position outside the classroom was short lived. The move to junior high intersected with significant family issues. It was at this point that The Cellist learned the passing strategies that would serve her all the way though her college years.

As The Prom Queen prepared to go to middle school, her concerns over her difficulty with reading and the concomitant academic struggles were diminished by her new, privileged social status. The Prom Queen relished her privileged position outside the classroom and is intent on maintaining her position by using connections with other privileged peers (Bourdieu, 1983). This concurs with Alexander-Passe’s (2008) assertion that dyslexic girls are more affected by social interactions at school than their non-dyslexic peers.

According to Morgan and Klein (2001), responses from the peer group can be a powerful influence on the individual’s perception of self. The participants confirmed the effect that their peers had on their lives. Dyslexics are seldom allowed to forget they are different. This awareness is reflected in the need for undiagnosed dyslexics to make comparisons with peers and to recognize intuitively their undefined and unacknowledged learning differences (p. 53). Loneliness and isolation are typical of many undiagnosed dyslexics (Tur-Kaspa, Weisel and Segev, 1988). This loneliness and isolation often creates the need to “pass as literate.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the ways in which undiagnosed dyslexic females negotiated their identities in the figured world of school. A case study methodology was selected to examine how three women perceived their worlds and how they negotiated the challenges associated with undiagnosed dyslexia. As the women described their positions in their figured worlds of school, this study identified issues of power, identity and agency around which their lives were organized. The answers to the following research questions were sought: (1) How do adult women who were undiagnosed dyslexic girls reflect upon their negotiations of identity in the figured world of school (Holland et al., 1998)? (2) Is there evidence that dyslexic girls attempt to pass as literate? If so, what types of "passing" attempts and techniques are used by dyslexic adolescent girls to appear more literate?

The previous chapters supported an understanding of these questions in several ways. Chapter 1 identified the purpose of the study and the rationale for the research questions. Chapter 2 reviewed the relevant research that focused on the complexities of dyslexia as well as the theoretical underpinnings of identity construction, adolescence, and "passing as literate." Chapter 3 provided an explanation for the selection of case study methodology and descriptions of data collection techniques, data analysis approach, researcher role, and methods for ensuring trustworthiness criteria for the findings.

In Chapter 4, research data were presented and analyzed to examine how undiagnosed dyslexic girls negotiated a similar experience in the figured world of school.

The major findings as they related to undiagnosed dyslexic adolescent girls are the following:

1. Variations in negotiation of text were influenced by the reading program currently in vogue, the learning style of the participants, and the pedagogical decisions of the teacher.
2. Discussions and oral presentations, in multiple contexts, provided the necessary intellectual scaffold to access and make meaning of text.
3. Expenditure of effort while engaging in literacy tasks was variable and was contingent upon the perceived value of the task and the individual requesting engagement.
4. Performances enacted to establish an aspirational literacy identity took precedence over actual literacy tasks.
5. Incidents of literacy shaming were common among participants, but the form and reactions to literacy shaming were variable.
6. Identity performances required to "pass as literate" included engagement in (a) performances that hide; (b) performances that deceive; and (c) performances that use learning strengths.
7. Disparity between cognitive abilities and academic performance resulted in conflicting identities.

In this chapter, I discuss these seven major findings in the context of two salient themes supported by data from all three participants:

1. Classroom practices created contexts in which participants constructed their literate identities.

2. Participants attempted to resolve the conflicts of being an undiagnosed dyslexic by utilizing strategies that facilitated their ability to "pass" as literate.

Classroom Practices

Increasing Academic Demands

As the undiagnosed dyslexic child matures, she faces new and challenges. For students who begin the intermediate grades with weak word recognition skills or poor fluency, the challenges of intermediate-level reading can lead to or exacerbate reading difficulties and lower-achievement in reading (McCormack & Paratore, 2003; Salinger, 2003; Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). The demand to read more complex texts increases in the fourth and fifth grades (Allington, 2001; Salinger, 2003). Likewise, teachers at these grade levels require students to do more independent reading and independent learning from their reading as the shift from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' takes hold (National Reading Panel, 2000). Students with lower-achievement in reading in the intermediate grades continue to experience reading difficulties throughout high school and adulthood. Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) suggested that students with reading difficulties are more likely than those without reading difficulties to drop out of school. They presented a compelling argument that dropping out of school is not a one-time, one-moment phenomenon, but a situation that begins early in one's school career when the efforts to attain a kind of school literacy that reflects high-level thinking about text go awry. Stanovich (1986) clarified this phenomenon by explaining that reading difficulties overshadow reading strengths when word recognition strategies compete with memory capacity for higher-level functions such as comprehension. This resulted in a painstaking

effort by the reader to merely “get through” the text. Slow, capacity-draining word-recognition processes monopolized the reader’s cognitive resources leaving little to focus on higher-level processes of text integration and comprehension.

Pressley (2002) emphasized that students in the intermediate grades who still struggle with word recognition read less because reading becomes unrewarding, thus practice with reading is avoided, precluding eventual growth and development. Stanovich (2000) described this phenomenon as a “downward spiral” for students, suggesting that if word-level difficulties are not overcome, the students’ experiences with reading became worse.

The Prom Queen’s move to middle school provided an unexpected relief from the escalating academic demands. The Prom Queen was faced with the renegotiation of multiple positions as she entered middle school. Her difficulty with reading and her concomitant academic struggles quickly take a backseat to her social concerns. The Prom Queen relished and capitalized on her growing privileged position outside the classroom and was intent on maintaining her position by using connections with other privileged peers (Bourdieu, 1983). The importance of maintaining her privileged social position and the minimizing of her reading difficulties is evident in this exchange.

Ellen:	How were your grades?
The PromQueen:	I think they were average, to be honest. I don't know off the top of my head. There might’ve been a bad grade in one subject, but I think they were -- I don't know. Probably Cs.
Ellen:	Were you concerned about them?
The Prom Queen:	It wasn’t my top thing that was on my mind.
Ellen:	What was on your mind?
The Prom Queen:	Going to middle school. Just meeting boys, cheering, and that kind of stuff. I think fifth grade is

when you start to realize that you're - you need to start doing more stuff.

Ellen: It sounds like you were confident in your social position. You didn't have to be anxious about that aspect of your life.

The Prom Queen: Yes! That was nice.

We discussed the dichotomy of freedom versus isolation in the expanding social milieu. She perceived the change as beneficial.

The Prom Queen: I think it helped me. Because it kind of relieved some of my anxiety or stress.

Ellen: Why was that?

The Prom Queen: Just because it was something fun instead of always being serious and always trying to figure a way out. It was something fun for me.

The change in the curriculum in middle school no longer placed a emphasis on the much dreaded reading groups. The Prom Queen found many safe places to feel competent socially and she had developed strategies for utilizing her peers in both ethical and unethical ways to stay afloat in school.

The Cellist's move to junior high intersected with significant family issues. With much trepidation, she revealed that her father had lost his job thus leaving her with clothes that no longer measured up with those of her peers. Now pubescent, she shared the tumultuous ending of a lifelong incestuous relationship with her father. Her reference to herself as being "shiet and guy" hints that this trauma had left her with some gender confusion.

Ellen: Let's go to middle school.

The Cellist: Middle school, when I became shiet and guy?

Ellen: When you became shy and quiet?

The Cellist: No, "shiet and guy." Never mind. Um, I think there was just a lot more I didn't get that I saw other kids getting. But puberty happened. I told you stuff was weird at my house.

	My father lost his job at that time. Um, so I didn't have this -- you know, like the clothes and stuff that a lot of kids had, but I felt like that meant more to me. Um, I had also been sexually abused by my father for a long time, so, you know, there was a whole lot that wasn't in place, so... This is confidential. That was scary to tell you, you know that.
Ellen:	I know it is.
The Cellist:	Um, you know, there's just -- at home there was not a lot of -- there was no support, actually. And as I hit puberty, that became so complicated.
Ellen:	Did any of your friends know about that?
The Cellist:	No.
Ellen:	Did anybody know about it?
The Cellist:	No, except for my mother.

Performing literacy required extensive interpersonal political maneuvering, and impression management. The Cellist summarizes this complexity of social positioning in simple terms. "Well, you know, you have this whole thing, and -- in school that says, you know, smart is good. Dumb is bad. And reading seems to be that determiner."

Particular ways of acting upon and acting with literacy place individuals and social groups into hierarchical positions within society (Compton-Lilly, 2007). Compton-Lilly suggests that these positions are indicators of social reading capital. Memberships in groups with high levels of social reading capital require the appearance of possessing good reading skills. In addition, social reading capital involves the ability to recognize, access, and utilize social relationships that support the reader. Once established, these social networks provide access to social, economic, and political power that are intrinsic to relationships with family members, teachers, and peers.

Ability Grouping

Recent research shows that 59% of kindergarten through eighth-grade teachers surveyed admitted to still using round-robin reading or a variation of the technique (Ash,

Kuhn, & Walpole, 2009). Round-robin reading is a teacher-directed, transmissional strategy in which the teacher calls on students one after the other to read one paragraph, one page, or a section of text from one heading to another. Students who are not reading orally are asked to follow along silently with the reader. Readers who struggle often lose their places, and proficient readers are either bored or read ahead of the group. Cellist has vivid memories of how reading instruction was transmitted in her classroom as well as her visceral reaction to ability grouping.

> The Cellist: I was just thinking, you know, it was the whole reading group thing. You know, who's in the best reading group; who's in the -- who's struggling.
>
> Ellen: So you were divided out into groups.
>
> The Cellist: Mm-hmm. A little bit, mm-hmm. But I had better strategies than -- I'm just thinking, because Mary Ellen Porter was in my second-grade class, and she had more troubles than I did. And -- and I knew she wasn't dumb. But then, you know, I had troubles and I felt dumb, so --- who knows.

Lucy's first experience with ability grouping did not occur until high school. The jolt of this experience added to her growing identity conflicts.

> Lucy I was put in classes that had the slower, poorer students. I know that for a fact.
>
> EH How do you know that?
>
> Lucy Because they were all the goobers around me, not the cool smart kids.

Ability grouping can lead to a wider achievement gap between students in higher and lower level groups. In addition, lower ability groups often receive an inferior form of instruction characterized by nonspecific skills-based and decoding activities as well as less emphasis on meaning and critical thinking

Literacy Shaming

The phenomenon of this downward spiral can include a debilitating affective component. Incidents of literacy shaming were consistent among participants, but the form and reactions to literacy shaming were variable. According to Thomson (1996) there are two reactions to the stress of shaming created as a result of the demands of the classroom context on the dyslexic reader. The Cellist and the Prom Queen demonstrated an under-reaction to shaming in that they withdrew and manifested extreme anxiety. This included fear reactions such as trembling and sweating when asked to read. When asked about the reactions of her peers to her struggles here response was mild compared to her reaction to the apathy of her teacher.

The Cellist:	I have visions of first grade reading groups. And just, I never could figure out what -- why those kids could understand -- or could get from the written page what I couldn't. Well, I mean, they could look at the page and say, "This says this," and I'm going, "Where? How does it say that?" And, you know, eventually, you know, figured out enough pieces so I could struggle through.
Ellen:	What did those pieces look like?
The Cellist:	Yeah, like shapes of words, the letters that hang down, the letters that stick up. But it was also wiggly. You know, my reading was wiggly
Ellen:	Did they have any kind of reaction as they watched you struggle through this oral reading situation?
The Cellist:	I don't remember too much except for impatience sometimes.
Ellen:	And how would they show their impatience?
The Cellist:	They would say, "Oh, come on." (pause) But I -- the -- what the teacher did and said hurt more, I think. Well, is that true? (pause) I seem to remember more -- much more of what the teacher did, Mrs. Koonz --
Ellen:	What would she say?
The Cellist:	"You're just not trying."“You know that word." And she's always the one -- the one that put me on the spot, not the kids.
Ellen:	What does "putting on the spot" mean to you?

The Cellist: Well, I mean, we had to take turns in reading group.

Ellen: She put you on the spot by making you read aloud.

These participants verbalized low self-opinions and generalized every aspect of their life as a failure. Attributes of depression were also apparent (Ryan, 1994). When asked about oral reading, The Prom Queen's comments insinuated abandonment by teachers while facing terror, nerves, and desperation. She reflected some level of understanding for why she was abandoned. She knew they wanted her to do something, but she was unable to meet their expectations. The "shut down" phenomenon was alluded to in this exchanged. She predicted future situations like this one. She also formed expectations that teachers were not to be relied upon for help.

Ellen: How was that when you were asked to read out loud?

The Prom Queen: Terrifying. Well, I mean, I got very nervous, and of course I made it ten times worse, and you know, all the times I'd look up at the teacher for help and never got any.

Ellen: What would you want her to do?

The Prom Queen: Something. I never got a response. They wanted me to do it on my own, which I did understand, but help me sound it out or go through that process. I shut down.

Ellen: What do you mean by that, you 'shut down'?

The Prom Queen: Well, I was very embarrassed, and, you know, I thought, you know, all through school that's what it was going to be about, you know. In my head I didn't think teachers helped as much as they should've.

Although research has been completed on teacher-student interactions from a variety of perspectives (Cochran-Smith, 1984; Cohen, 1972; Grant & Rothenberg, 1986; O'Connor & Michaels, 1993), research is needed that connects these interactions with the

literate identities of undiagnosed dyslexics. It is daunting to know that the words and actions of a teacher can have such a powerful impact on a student.

Shaming through round robin reading. A transmissional reading task format often conducted with a whole class or small group instructional models is round-robin reading (RRR). Despite the popularity and longevity of RRR, there are caveats to using this method with dyslexic readers. Reading aloud publicly puts those who struggle with reading in a position of being humiliated and demoralized by displaying their weak skills in front of their peers. Their more skilled peers may feel uncomfortable as well when subjected to listening to poor examples of reading. Another concern about RRR is the very minimal practice provided by this method. If there are more than a small number of students in the group, each individual student is only reading for a very short period of time (Rasinski, 2006

Organizing reading instruction through ability grouping reinforced this escalating marginalization of the undiagnosed dyslexic. As earlier noted, once a child is assigned to a low group the chances of moving to a high group are very low (Hiebert 1983). The Prom Queen illustrated the stigma that resulted from ability grouping and how she negotiated the subsequent public shaming. She gave a detailed account of how she negotiated the context of round robin reading.

The Prom Queen:	I'm not sure, but I think that triggered my first ever anxiety attack.
Ellen:	How did you negotiate the inevitable?
The Prom Queen:	I counted the number of students who would read before my turn. I tried to predict which sentences would be mine, and I read and re-read it. I invented other avoidance techniques that I would rely on for years.
Ellen:	Could you describe those techniques?

The Prom Queen: I ducked down to tie my shoes. I needed to sharpen my pencil. I went to the bathroom. Sometimes as my turn approached I would get physically sick and leave to see the nurse.

Ellen: Did the teacher ever catch on?

The Prom Queen: I don't know. She never called on me.

Time to Say Goodbye Round Robin. Remarkably, one still finds 59% of kindergarten through eighth-grade teachers using round-robin reading or a variation of the technique (Ash, Kuhn, & Walpole, 2009). The shaming that accompanies RRR is but one negative aspect of this archaic method. Round Robin Reading can cause unnecessary sub-vocalization that occurs when one reader is reading aloud and the others are expected to follow along, reading silently. Because oral reading is slower than silent reading, the silent readers are therefore encouraged to sub-vocalize every word. This sub vocalization may become internalized and cause slower reading rates (Opitz and Rasinski,1998) and reduce the amount of reading that will occur.

Round Robin Reading consumes valuable classroom time that could be spent on other meaningful literacy activities. Because oral reading, being much slower than silent reading, takes longer, the number of words that students will read over a school year can actually decrease (Stanovich, 1986). Add to this slower rate the additional time that is used to keep students on track, reminding them where to focus, and a considerable amount of time has been invested in an ineffective activity. (Opitz and Rasinski, 1998).

Round Robin Reading can be a source of anxiety and embarrassment for all students. Reading aloud to others without the opportunity to rehearse causes much anxiety and embarrassment especially for the dyslexic reader. Students are so focused on "saving face" that they forget the real purpose of reading—to comprehend.

Round Robin Reading can work against all students developing to their full potential. When children make a mistake when reading aloud, they are corrected by others before they have an opportunity to correct themselves (Allington, 2001). One of the most important skills for all children to learn, however, is to monitor themselves, paying attention to meaning and self-correcting when meaning is interrupted. Because less fluent readers are generally not afforded this opportunity, they are less likely to develop this most important skill.

Like many undiagnosed dyslexic readers, The Prom Queen became positioned as a resistant reader. Brozo (2000) explains how resistant readers hide out in secondary school classrooms. Undiagnosed dyslexics, through the marginalizing labels we place upon them, are often set up to become resistant to reading (Alvermann, 2001).

What we know about stopping the downward spiral of shame is limited, but hopefully, the results of this study have illuminated some possibilities. What we do know is that organizing reading instruction through ability grouping reinforces the escalating marginalization of the undiagnosed dyslexic. Once a child is assigned to a low group the chances of moving to a high group is very low (Hiebert 1983). Students in high and low ability reading groups often receive different instruction. Children in low groups typically have fewer opportunities to read while students in higher groups spend more time on critical thinking and read almost double the amount of text as do low ability groups (Allington &. Cunningham, 1996). Thus, ability grouping can lead to a wider achievement gap between students in higher and lower level groups. In addition, lower ability groups receive an inferior form of instruction characterized by nonspecific skills-based and decoding activities as well as less emphasis on meaning and critical thinking

Students in lower-level groups may be stigmatized and ultimately experience a negative effect on self esteem (Reutzel & Cooter, 1991).

Literacy shaming is a debilitating form of symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Public humiliation reflected negatively on the participants' social standing. All reported incidents of literacy shaming related to oral reading. They told stories of elaborate strategies that they used to avoid reading orally to maintain their social capital. Relegation to the lowest reading group was a devastating experience for all the participants. Drawing on sociocognitive perspectives, once students are assigned to the position of struggling reader, they are further positioned based on the demonized nuances of this inclusive category. Guthrie and Davis (2003) equated struggling readers with disengaged readers. Johannessen (2004) grouped struggling, reluctant, at-risk, disadvantaged, alienated, resistant, and educationally deprived adolescent readers together under the term *reluctant readers*. Regardless of the label, the students who are relegated to low reading groups are cast in a role void of cultural or social capital (Bourdieu, 1998).

Power of Talk

The successes of the undiagnosed dyslexic are often contingent upon the context of the classroom and pedagogical choices of the teacher. The teacher's interaction with students through their lesson structure, questioning patterns, and general talk with their students can influence student participation in literacy events (Cazden, 1986). This interaction can occur as a process of transmission or as a process of transaction. The Prom Queen benefitted from the transmissional lecture format that is often referred to as banking pedagogy (Freire, 1970). The Prom Queen revealed her strategy of memorizing

the entire classroom lecture thus eliminating the need to read the text. For The Prom Queen, this transmission of knowledge from the teacher was her first access to the body of text which provided a pool of knowledge for future discussion in her homework group.

The homework group promoted a different opportunity in that learning was dialogical. The Prom Queen could assume the dual roles of learner and teacher. The Prom Queen constructed and co-constructed knowledge through these social interactions. This process would be impossible for The Prom Queen without the primary transmission of knowledge from the instructor.

Lucy expressed positive outcomes from both a transmissional and transactional approach to learning. Lucy's transmissional learning strategies included interaction with a surrogate teacher who was randomly selected from available dorm mates. These surrogates were paid by Lucy to read the classroom assignments from her texts to her on a nightly basis. Instilled with this newly transmitted knowledge, she turned to her peers and classmates and doggedly pursued them for a few minutes to discuss all they knew about the pending classroom assignment. These discussions provided a vehicle for substantive transactional learning opportunities. Once information was acquired she was able to fully engage in the learning process characterize.

The participants in this study demonstrated the way authentic conversation provided a means for the dyslexic reader to engage in high-level thinking to the same extent as their peers. The classrooms in which the dyslexic reader, their peers, and teachers created contexts that supported discussions provided the opportunity for all to be invested participants in classroom literacy acts. Researchers have begun to conceptualize literacy instruction of dyslexics from a Vygotskyian perspective. This view places

emphasis on constructing meaningful activities in a social community that uses dialogic interaction to scaffold learning (Englert, 1992; Englert & Palincsar, 1991; Poplin, 1988; Stone, 1989). Although these principles have been studied in a range of interactive literacy contexts (Au & Kawakami, 1986; Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Rogoff, 1990), few researchers have extended them to the instruction of students who are nonreaders and nonwriters.

Passing as Literate

While some identities are often unconsciously reproduced, others are the result of a conscious practice of figuring the world. This process can be accomplished through the expert use of cultural tools. Once aware of one's position, the individual may choose to remediate and in doing so, create other ways in which to be positioned. Bakhtin (1981) views this act as a manifestation of agency. Like The Cellist, dyslexic pupils are likely to be aware that the position of "good reader" is valued by their culture and peers (Pollard and Filer, 1999) and that diversionary tactics must be used to create and protect their literacy position. To achieve the position of "good reader," Lucy, The Cellist, and The Prom Queen all demonstrated expert use of cultural tools to sustain a presentation of themselves as being more competent readers than they really were and to pass as literate. In my analysis of the data, I identified three themes related to the ways in which the research participants attempted to pass as literate. These included performances that deceive, performances that hide and performances that utilize learning strengths.

Performances that Deceive

The Cellist's motivation for passing as literate revolved around the need to be liked and accepted by her peers and significant adults. She admitted to compromising her

values and ethics in order to maintain a position of "looking smart" so as not to lose the acceptance and love of the first teacher who had loved her. Reading groups stopped and Cellist had to find another way "to be invisible, to not stick out." The Cellist's skill at deception escalated as she employed cheating techniques to maintain her position of "good student,"

> The Cellist: Well, I -- well, actually I'm just going to tell you that the reason -- because third grade was the very first teacher I felt she loved me, and I wanted to do well for her and I remember I wanted her to continue liking me, and I didn't want her to figure out how -- the stuff I didn't get.
>
> Ellen: You worked hard to keep that from her that year?
>
> The Cellist: Yes, I did. I worked very hard. And I compromised my own self-image to do that. We had these little desks so you could prop up so it could have a flat surface or a slanted surface, and I would always have the spelling words right there, and I'd sit back, and -- I can't believe she never caught me once the whole year, but she didn't.
>
> Ellen: You made 100s for every spelling test?
>
> The Cellist: Mm-hmm.

The Prom Queen was open in her disclosure of cheating as a means to avoid being stigmatized by her peers. She admitted to proficiency in this means of deception. In addition, she reported a sophisticated moral paradigm that provided a sanctioned structure for her deception. Cheating methods varied but those from whom she covertly obtained information must adhere to strict qualifications. The most stringent rule was that she could never cheat from a friend. She also revealed that she possessed the ability to identify her partners in crime, but her co-conspirators were never revealed.

> The Prom Queen: Um, I'm trying to think back. It's so hard. And I knew how to cheat.
>
> Ellen: How did that happen, that you knew how to cheat? Did someone tell you?

The Prom Queen:	I think I saw some kids doing it, and I think I just caught on.
Ellen:	What were they doing?
The Prom Queen:	Just looking at someone else's paper. Because our desks were very close together, so it was very easy to kind of put your eyes, you know. I was very good at cheating. Yes. I was very good at that.

Performances That Hide

One of the best places to observe the literacy activities of adolescents is on the pages of the middle and high school yearbook. The Prom Queen and I spent several afternoons looking through her yearbooks and discussing past and present peer relationships. One afternoon I explained that we were going to focus on fifth, sixth, and seventh grades, and that I was going to ask her to go back, and see if the pictures might activate memories. When asked about peer group participation in reading and writing in yearbooks or reading and writing diaries, her memories are vivid:

> No. I stayed away from anything I could with that. They all wrote in diaries. I never did. We just talked about boys and watched movies. I never, um, tried to do anything that would show that I couldn't do it. I always wanted to do that, um, but it was just too much. I just knew that there was something wrong with me. I just didn't know what or how to deal with it.

Lucy avoided disclosure when I asked her if her peers knew she was dyslexic. She answered abruptly but then followed up with a diversionary anecdote. Her body language disclosed discomfort with this topic and she used the anecdote to diffuse her angst. She simply said, "Never came up socially."

The Cellist reached the pinnacle of her social capital as she reigned as a "lady in waiting" in the realm of the playground. It was here that The Cellist's privileged position outside the classroom provided preeminence relative her struggles with literacy. With status as disguise, literacy difficulties took backseat to social success.

Performances that Use Learning Strengths

Middle School brought more sophisticated ways of passing. With two college educated parents, The Cellist came to the classroom with extensive funds of knowledge about the world and how it works. To “look smart” Cellist would make a preemptive strike and ask a “really good question” about some part of the day’s lesson about which she had previous knowledge. In doing so she appeared knowledgeable of and engaged in the assignment. The result was freedom from future questioning regarding unfamiliar text and maintenance of reading capital (Lilly-Compton,2007). Cellist used this technique all the way through college and in doing so avoided the necessity of ever having to read a book. Both the Prom Queen and Lucy used their extraordinary listening skills and auditory memories to utilize information transmitted via oral presentation and discussions.

Implications for Classroom Practice

Applying Theories of Vygotsky

Dyslexic readers in this study thrived as thinkers about text in discussions that included the groups’ engagement in problem-solving. Through this engagement they were able to approach their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state. These functions could be termed the "buds" or "flowers" of development rather than the "fruits" of development (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). Vygotsky originally conceived the ZPD in terms of the dyad of a learner and an adult or more skilled peer, such that the zone was defined entirely by the larger knowledge and competence of a dominant matured person. The ZPD may also be a

more open space of responsiveness such as peers meeting over a shared literacy task, providing communicative challenges to each other, or simply exploring new texts. By being positioned in her ZPD, the dyslexic reader can move from the position of powerlessness to solve problems on her own to a position of power from which she can solve problems, albeit with assistance. Similarly, to make learning available for students, instructors must bring new material and skills into a zone of intelligibility, possible participation, and motivated interaction. Students recognize and incorporate the new tools only insofar as they help direct and shape attention and motives already forming in pursuit of some desired object.

The findings of this study suggest that teachers need to understand ways to encourage discussions that elicits genuine problem-solving about the meanings of text. Teachers need to understand the discourse features that indicate high-level thinking to model and discuss the features in their work with dyslexic students during discussions about literary texts. Discourse provides the necessary intellectual scaffolds for dyslexic readers who use talk as a tool to make meaning. The talk during the discussions provides opportunities for participants in the discussions to draw on their knowledge of reading comprehension strategies and to use those strategies in authentic or organic ways during the discussions. The contextual foundations of the discussions provided opportunities for the dyslexic readers to think in high-level ways.

Vygotsky's (1978) work suggests that cognitive functions appear first on a social plane before going underground as they are internalized. Within this process, language and discourse become the primary tools by which teachers mediate performance. These same tools are then used by students to mediate their own performance. Talk that was

once socially enacted between teachers and students is subsequently enacted by the student in private. The Prom Queen and her study group gave an excellent example of this process. Through these processes the words and regulatory functions originally performed by the teacher become internalized by the students as they assert their voices in the learning community.

Thus, classroom dialogue helps to achieve a context in which the dyslexic student can experience full participation. To further ensure this participation, the nature of instruction should provide an opportunity for the involvement of dyslexic students in holistic and contextualized activities, participation in school-based discourse, the interaction of teachers and students through scaffold dialogues, and a social context that promotes full membership in the literacy community. In this pursuit, discussion provides the necessary mechanism to light the way for the dyslexic reader.

Future of Teacher Education

Obviously, teaching reading to dyslexic readers is a job for an expert. Learning to read is a complex linguistic achievement. Moreover, teaching reading requires considerable knowledge and skill, acquired over several years through focused study and supervised practice. No one can develop such expertise by taking one or two college courses, or attending a few in-service workshops. Although reading is the cornerstone of academic success, a single course in reading methods is often all that is offered most prospective teachers. Even if well taught, a single course is only the beginning. The demands of competent reading instruction, and the training experiences necessary for mastery, have been seriously underestimated by universities and by those who have

approved licensing programs. The consequences for teachers and students alike have been disastrous.

Conceptualizing literacy instruction of dyslexics from a Vygotskian perspective places the onus on literacy educators to construct meaningful activities in a social community that uses dialogic interaction to scaffold learning. As children pass through the classroom doors, they come equipped with linguistic expertise. They have acquired linguistic competence in the phonology, grammar, word meaning, and pragmatics of their culture's language. Educators must ensure that this expertise is acknowledged and utilized as instruction in reading ensues.

Stanovich (2000) begs professional to find common ground. Establishing a civil debate is in the interest of furthering knowledge about the complex processes of literacy acquisition. It is essential to set aside the controversies and questions central to the reading wars and strive for ever-improving research and practice. The literacy community must engage in a detente to effect change and help every child become a reader.

Suggestions for Future Research

New Literacies of the 21st Century

To become fully literate in today's world, students must become proficient in the new literacies of 21st-century technologies. This is especially true for dyslexic students who have limited access to traditional literacies. Literacy scholars must explore constructivist and sociocultural theories of teaching reading with a focus on dyslexics' limited access to text and the resultant inequalities in power relationships. From this focus, questions relative to dyslexia and social justice will inevitably emerge. Siegel and Fernandez (2000) confirm that inequalities and injustices persist in schools and society

and that literacy instruction may become a site for contesting the status quo. Thus, as information and communication technologies (ICTs) redefine the nature of literacy, it is incumbent on literacy professionals to engage in research that will explore strategies to integrate these new technologies into the literacy curriculum. ICT's have the potential to equalize access to power in the classroom so that dyslexics, and all students, have equal access to successful civic participation in a global environment. Research questions that address how technology empowers persons with dyslexia, as well others who have limited access to printed text must be answered.

Literacy researchers must begin to look at the myriad holistic possibilities technology has to offer. The new instructional focus must take into consideration not only the students, their talents, their development, their interests, but the technology possibilities as well. In addition, when viewing technology in the classroom, research must explore the potential for circumventing a student's reading problem. By empowering students through access to audiovisual reference libraries, students can become proficient in gathering the information that formerly was limited to textual form. As dyslexics master the use of optical character recognition systems, they immediately gain independent access to multiple texts from which higher order thinking skills can be taught. Speech synthesizing technologies enable students to write into text the language they construct. These two technologies are but a sampling of the possibilities for circumventing reading and writing problems. Repeated access to these technologies will help develop writing and reading skills in much the same way that language experience methods seek to do (Poplin, 1995).

Assistive Technologies

Raskind (1993) suggests several types of assistive technologies that allow persons with dyslexia to compensate for disabilities rather than attempt to remediate them. These include word processing, spell checking, proof- reading programs, outlining programs, abbreviation expanders, speech recognition, speech synthesis, optical character recognition systems, personal data managers, listening aids, talking calculators, laser disc reference books and other interactive media and television.

In the era of new literacies and new technologies, West (1991) proposes that those who are now called dyslexic may be in position of privilege in the upcoming world. The new market for ability and skills may increasingly devalue the conventional literate accomplishments that have carried such high prestige for hundreds of years. This new market may gradually begin to reward the creative, visual-thinking dyslexics who have had such a difficult time in a traditionally literate society. It is possible that these individuals may be recognized for the talents and strengths they have always exhibited rather than being penalized or excluded. In the new era of literacy, their weaknesses will come to be seen as increasingly inconsequential.

This post-literate society will require new schools to adjust their focus to emphasize the ability to quickly access and correctly assess the implications of pertinent information, regardless of its source. Working memory limitations will be circumvented because access to information will take precedence over committing information to memory. As such trends continue, perhaps a shift in policy focus will occur. Instead of focusing on obsolete standardized test score, teachers will be able to attend to issues of social justice and the ways that educators and policymakers take responsibility for

ensuring equitable learning conditions for all children in every school and in every classroom.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the ways in which currently diagnosed dyslexic females, who navigated adolescence and their concomitant schooling without a definitive diagnosis of dyslexia, negotiated their identities in the figured world of school. To explore this phenomenon, it was necessary to understand the complexity of dyslexia as well as the theoretical underpinnings of identity construction, adolescence, and "passing as literate." This case study was be informed by poststructuralist thought; through this lens I examined how my subjects perceived their worlds and how they negotiated the challenges associated with undiagnosed dyslexia. As they described their positions in their figured worlds, I searched for issues of power, identity and agency around which their lives appeared to be organized.

The answers to the following research questions were sought: (1) How do adult women who were undiagnosed dyslexic girls reflect upon their negotiations of identity in the figured world of school (Holland et al., 1998)? (2) Is there evidence that girls attempt to pass as literate? If so, what types of "passing" attempts and techniques are used by dyslexic adolescent girls to appear more literate? The case study methodology offered the opportunity for the insight provided by detailed narratives of personal experiences. Data was collected by interviews, observations and researcher's field notes obtained through the stories of three adult dyslexic women. The data was be analyzed for affirming or conflicting themes and intergenerational connectedness. The stories were be retold in a

chronological pattern describing the participants' experiences from as many perspectives as possible.

The results of this study highlight the strength of the human spirit and the frailties of the educational system. The outcomes for each of the participants may have been different if early identification of their dyslexia had occurred and there were those within their schools who were trained to provide the appropriate intervention. Dyslexia is recognized and addressed worldwide, but in the United States there is no legislation that acknowledges its existence and mandates early diagnosis and intervention. It is my hope that the stories of these three courageous women will raise the awareness at all levels of the education hierarchy that there is much work to be done and the stakes are high. There are many little girls walking into school this year who may be destined to walk the journey of our participants. I pray they meet knowledgeable professionals along the way.

REFERENCES

Alexander-Passe, N. (2004). A living nightmare: An investigation of how dyslexics cope at school. Paper presented at the 6th British Dyslexia Association international conference. Retrieved January 10, 2010 from: www.bdainternationalconference.org/2004/presentations/mon s6 d 12.shtml

Alexander-Passe, N. (2008). The sources and manifestations of stress amongst school-aged dyslexics, compared with sibling controls. *Dyslexia, 14*(4), 291-313.

Allington, R.L., & Cunningham, P. (1996). *Schools that work*. New York, NY: Harper Collins College Publishers

Allington, R. L. (2001). What really matters for struggling readers: Designing research-based programs. New York: Addison Wesley Longman

Alvermann, D.E. (2000). Narrative approaches. In M. Kamil, R. Barr, P.D. Pearson, & P. Mosenthal (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research: Volume 3* (pp.123-139). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Alvermann, D.E. (2001). Reading adolescents' reading identities: Looking back to see ahead. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *44*, 676–690.

Alvermann, D. E. (2001). *Effective literacy instruction for adolescents.* Executive Summary and Paper Commissioned by the National Reading Conference. Chicago, IL: National Reading Conference.

American Association of University Women.(1992). *How schools shortchange girls*. New York: Marlow.

Applebee, A., Langer, J., Nystrand, M., & Gamoran, A. (2003). Discussion-based approaches to developing understanding: Classroom instruction and student

performance in middle and high school English. *American Educational Research Journal* 40: 3, pp. 685-730.

Ash, G. E. (2002, March). Teaching readers who struggle: A pragmatic middle school framework. *Reading Online,* 5(7). Retrieved February 14, 2010 from http://readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF=ash/index.html

Ash, G. W., Kuhn, M. R., & Walpole, S. (2009) Analyzing 'inconsistencies' in practice: Teachers continued use of round robin reading. *Reading and Writing Quarterly, 25*: 87-103.

Au, K.H., & Kawakami, A.J. (1985). Research currents: Talk story and learning to read. *Language Arts, 62*(4), 406-411.

Badian, N. A. (2005). Does a visual-orthographic deficit contribute to reading disability? *Annals of Dyslexia,* 55, 28-52.

Bakhtin, Michael M.(1981). *The dialogic imagination*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Banks, J., Cochran-Smith, M., Moll, L., Richert, A., Zeichner, K., LePage, P., et al. (2005). Teaching diverse learners. In L. Darling-Hammond & J. Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do*. (pp. 232-274). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Berry, C. A., Shaywitz, S. E., & Shaywitz, B. A. (1985). Girls with attention deficit disorder: A silent minority? A report on behavioral and cognitive characteristics. *Pediatrics, 76*(5), 801.

Bettie, J. (2003) *Women without class: Girls, race and identity.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Biancarosa, G., & Snow, CE. (2006). Reading next: A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy. A report from Carnegie Corporation of New York. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Boaler, J., & Greeno J. G. (2000). Identity, agency and knowing in mathematics worlds. In J. Boaler (Ed.), *Multiple perspectives on mathematics teaching and learning* (pp. 171-200). Elsevier Science, Stanford, CA

Bogdan, R. C & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (4th ed.). New York: Pearson Education group.

Bourdieu, P. (1986) "The Forms of Capital" in ed. J.G Richardson, *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*, New York: Greenwood Press: 241-258.

Bourdieu, P. and Passeron,J.C. (1990) *Reproduction in education, society and culture*, Sage Publications Inc.

British Dyslexia Association. (2009). *What is dyslexia*? Retrieved June 29, 2009, from the World Wide Web: http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/whatisdyslexia.html#what

Broughton, M.A. & Fairbanks, C.M.. (2002). Stances and dances: The negotiation of subjectivities in a reading/language arts classroom. *Language Arts,* 79(4), 288-296.

Brozo, W.G. (2000). Hiding out in secondary classrooms: Coping strategies. In D.W. Moore, D.E. Alvermann, &K.A. Hinchman (Eds.), *Struggling adolescent readers: Acollection of teaching strategies* (pp. 51–56). Newark, DE:International Reading Association.

Butler, J. (1994). Bodily inscriptions, performative subversions. In S. Salih (Ed.) *The Judith Butler Reader* (pp. 90-118). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble*. London and New York: Routledge.

Chouliaraki, L. & Fairclough, N. (1999). *Discourse in late modernity. Rethinking critical discourse analysis.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Cochran-Smith, M. (1984). *The making of a reader.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Zeichner, K. (2005). *Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Cohen, E. G. (1972). Sociology and the classroom: Setting the conditions for teacher-student interaction. *Review of Educational Research, 42*, 441-452.

Coleman, J. C. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 95-120.

Committee on Children With, Disabilities. (1998). Learning disabilities, dyslexia, and vision: A subject review. *Pediatrics, 102*(5), 1217-1219.

Compton-Lilly, C. (2007). The Complexities of Reading Capital in Two Puerto Rican Families. *Reading Research Quarterly, 42*(1), 72-98.

Connell, R. W. (1987). *Gender and power.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Cox, B. E., Fang, Z., & Otto, B. W. (2004). Preschoolers' developing ownership of the literate register. In R. B. Ruddell & N. J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed.). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Cox, B. E., Shanahan, T., & Sulzby, E. (1990). Good and Poor Elementary Readers' Use of Cohesion in Writing. *Reading Research Quarterly, 25*(1), 47-65.

Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle Creek, NJ: Pearson Education.

Davies, Bronwyn. (2003) *Shards of glass: Children reading and writing beyond gendered identities.* Hampton Press.

Dyson, A. H. (1995). Writing children: Reinventing the development of childhood literacy. *Written Communication*,12, 4–46.

Eh:ri, L. C., & McCormick, S. (2004). Phases of word learning: implications for instruction with delayed and disabled readers. In R. B. Ruddell & N. J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed.). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Engestrom,Y. (1999). Activity theory and individual and social transformayions. In Y. Engestrom, R. Miettinen, & R.L. Punamaki (Eds.) *Perspectives on activity theory*. (pp.19-38). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Englert, C. S. (1992). Writing instruction from a sociocultural perspective: The holistic, dialogic, and social enterprise of writing. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 25, 153-172.

Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: textual analysis for social research*. London and New York: Routledge.

Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance*, Evanston, IL: Row.

Field, J. (2003). *Social capital*, London: Routledge.

Finders, M. J. (1997). *Just girls: Hidden literacies and life in junior high*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Finders, M. J. (1998-99). Raging hormones: Stories of adolescence and implications for teachers. *Journal of Adult and Adolescent Literacy, 42*(4), 252-263.

Fine, M. (2000). Working the hyphens: Reinventing self and others in qualitative research. In N.K.Denzin & Y.S.Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). pp. 70-82). Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage.

Fisher, D. (2001). "We're moving on up": Creating a schoolwide literacy effort in an urban high school. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 45*, 92–101.

Foucault, M. (1976). *The history of sexuality Vol. 1: The will to knowledge*. London: Penguin.

Frith, U. (1999). Paradoxes in the definition of dyslexia. *Dyslexia* , 5, 192-214.

Gabrieli, J. D. E. (2009). Dyslexia: A new synergy between education and cognitive neuroscience. *Science, 325*, 280-283.

Gaffney, J., & Anderson, R. C. (2000). Trends in reading research in the United States: Changing intellectual currents over thirty years. *Handbook of Reading Research, Vol. III* (pp. 53-74). In M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.). New York: Erlbaum.

Gaub M, & Carlson, C. (1997) Gender differences in ADHD: A meta-analysis and critical review. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 8, 1036-45.

Gee, J. P. (1996). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses* (2nd ed.). London: The Falmer Press.

Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays. Retrieved from the World Wide Web: June 9, 2010, from http://www.iwp.uni-linz.ac.at/lxe/sektktf/gg/GeertzTexts/Thick_Description.htm

Gergen, K.J., & Gergen, M.M. (1988). Narrative and the self as relationship. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*, Vol. 21 (pp. 17–56). New York: Academic.

Gilger, J.W., Pennington, B.F., & DeFries, J.C. (1991). Risk for reading disabilities as a function of parental history in three samples of families. *Reading and Writing*, 3, 205-217.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Goffman, Erving. (1959). *The Presentation of self in everyday life.* New York: Anchor Books.

Goffman, Erving. (1963). *Stigma.* New York: Anchor Books.

Goodman, K. S. (1967). Reading: A psycholinguistic guessing game. *Journal of the Reading Specialist, 6*, 126-135.

Goodman, K. S. (1993). *Phonics phacts.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Grant, L., & Rothenberg, J. (1986). The social enhancement of ability differences: Teacher-student interactions in first- and second-grade reading groups. *The Elementary School Journal, 87*, 29-49.

Grimes, J. (2002). Responsiveness to interventions: The next step in special education identification, service, and exiting decision making. In R. Bradley, L. Danielson,

& D. Hallahan (Eds.), *Identification of learning disabilities: Research to practice* (pp. 531-547). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Guthrie, J. T., & Davis, M. H. (2003). Motivating struggling readers in middle school through an engagement model of classroom practice. *Reading and Writing Quarterly,19*, 59-85.

Hall, S. *Early signs of a reading difficulty*. GreatSchools Inc., Retrieved July 1, 2010, from http://www.greatschools.net/LD/identifying/early-signs-of-reading-difficulty.gs?content=739.

Hallgren, B. (1950). Specific dyslexia: A clinical and genetic study. Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica 65: 179-189.

Hatt-Echeverria, B. (2005). What does it mean to be smart?: The figured world of smartness and student achievement. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational.Research Association. Montreal, CA.

Hiebert, E.H. 1983. An examination of ability grouping for reading instruction." *Reading Research Quarterly*, 18:231-55.

Hinshelwood, J. (1917). *Congenital word blindness*. London: H. K. Lewis & Co.

Ho, C. S.H., D. W.O. Chan, et al. (2005). Reading-related cognitive deficits in developmental dyslexia, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and developmental coordination disorder among Chinese children. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 40, 318-337.

hooks, bell. (2000). *From margins to center.* New York: South End Press.

Holland, D., Lachicotte, W., Skinner, D., & Cain, C. (1998). *Identity and agency in cultural worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hull, G., & Schultz, K. (2001). Literacy and learning out of school: A review of theory and research. *Review of Educational Research*, 71, 575–611.

International Dyslexia Association. (2009). What is dyslexia? Retrieved June 29, 2009, from the World Wide Web: http://www.interdys.org.

Joftus, S. (2002). Every child a graduate: A framework for an excellent education for all middle and high school students. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Joftus, S., & Maddox-Dolan, B. (2003). Left out and left beh:ind: NCLB and the American high school. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Johannessen, L.R. (2004). Helping "struggling" students achieve success. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *47*(8), 638–647.

Jones, S., & Myhill, D. (2004). Troublesome boys and compliant girls: Gender identity and perceptions of achievement and underachievement. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *25*(5), 547-561.

Juel, C., & Minden-Cupp, C. (2004). Learning to read words: Linguistic units and instructional strategies. In R. B. Ruddell & N. J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed.). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Kohlberg, Lawrence (1981). *Essays on moral development, Vol. I: The philosophy of moral development*. Harper & Row.

Kroeger, Brooke (2003). *Passing: When people can't be who they are*. New York: Public Affairs.

Kutz, E. (1997). *Language and literacy: Studying discourse in communities and classroom*s. Portsmouth: Boyton/Cook Publishers.

Lardieri, L, Blancher, J. & Swanson H. (2000). Sibling relationships and parent stress in families with children with and without learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 23(2): 105-116.

Lahey, B., et al. (1994). DSM-IV field trials for attention deficit disorder in children and adolescents. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 151, 1673-1685.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1998). Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leigh, A. H. (2006). Anything but lazy: New understandings about struggling readers, teaching, and text. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *41*(4), 424-444.

Lesko, N. (1984). *Symbolizing society:Rites and structures in a catholic high school.* New York: Routledge Falmer.

Lesko, N. (1996). Past, present, and future conceptions of adolescence. *Educational Theory*, *46*, 4-12.

Lesko, N. (2001). *Act your age! A cultural construction of adolescence*. New York: Routledge Falmer.

Levine, A. (2006, September) Educating school teachers: The education schools project. Retrieved June 25, 2010, from http://www.edschools.org/teacher_report_release.htm

Lin, A. (2008). *Problematizing Identity: Everyday struggles in language, culture, and education*. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Luke, A. (1987). Making Dick and Jane: Historical genesis of the modern basal reader. *Teachers College Record, 89*(1), 91-116.

Mayes, S. & Calhoun, S. (2000). Prevalence and degree of attention and learning problems in AD/HD and LD. *The AD/HD Report*, 8(2), 14-16.

Matzat, D. (1997) Apologetics in a postmodern age," *Issues, Etc. Journal,* 2, p.7.

McCarthey, S. (2001). Identity construction in elementary readers and writers. *Reading Research Quarterly, 36*, 122–151.

McCormack, R. L., & Paratore, J. R. (Eds.) (2003). After early intervention, then what? Teaching struggling readers in grades three and beyond. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

McDermott, R., & Varenne, H. (1995). Culture as disability. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 26*(3), 324-348.

McDermott, R., Goldman, S., & Varenne, H. (2006). The cultural work of learning disabilities. *Educational Researcher, 35*(6), 12-17.

Mendoza-Denton, Norma. (2008). *Homegirls: Language and cultural practice among Latina youth gangs*. Hoboken, NJ : Wiley, John & Sons, Incorporated

Merriam, S. (1998). Qualitative research and case study applications in education. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Minuchin, P. (1988). Relationships within the family: A systems perspective on development. In R.A. Hinde & J. Stevenson-Hinde (Eds.), *Relationships within families: Mutual influences* (7-26). New York: Oxford University Press.

Moje, E. B., Young, J. P., Readence, J. E., & Moore, D. W. (2000). Reinventing adolescent literacy for new times: Perennial and millennial issues. Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 43, 400-410.

Moje, E. B. & Dillon, D. R. (2006) Adolescent identities as demanded by science classroom discourse communities. In Alvermann, D.E., Hinchman, K. A., Moore, D.W., Phelps, S. F., & Waff, D.R. (Eds.), *Reconceptualizing the literacies in adolescent's lives* (pp. 85-106). Mahwah , NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Moll, L., Amanti, C., Neff, D. and Gonzalez, N. (2001). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. Theory Into Practice, XXXI, 2, 132-141.

Morgan, E., & Klein, C. (2001).*The dyslexic adult in a non-dyslexic world*. London, Whurr.

Murray, A. (1993). Confession before 1215:*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 3*, 51-81.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00-4769). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office

Nothen, M. M., G. Schulte-Korne, et al. (1999). Genetic linkage analysis with dyslexia: Evidence for linkage of spelling disability to chromosome 15. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 8, 50-56.

O'Connor, M. C., & Michaels, S. (1993). Aligning academic task and participation status through revoicing: Analysis of a classroom discourse strategy. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 24*, 318-335.

Opitz, M. & Rasinski, T. (1998). *Good-bye round robin: 25 effective oral reading strategies.* Heineman: Portsmouth, NH.

Orellana, M. F. (1996). Negotiating power through language in classroom meetings. *Linguistics and Education*, 8,335–365.

Orenstein, Peggy. (1995) *School girls: Young women, self-esteem, and the confidence gap.* New York: Knopf Publishing Group.

Osman, Betty. (1997) Learning disabilities and ADHD: A family guide to living and learning together. New York: John Wiley % Sons.

Palincsar, A.S. & Brown, A.L. (1984). Reciprocal teaching of compreh:ension- fostering and compreh:ension-monitoring activities. *Cognition and Instruction, 2*, 117-175.

Patel Stevens, L. (2005). Renaming adolescence: Subjectivities in complex settings. In J. A. Vadeboncoeur & L. Patel Stevens (Eds.), *Reconstructing the adolescent: Sign, symbol, and body* (pp. 271-282). New York: Peter Lang.

Patricia Polacco.com. (2009). The story. Retrieved January, 2010, from the World Wide Web: http://www.patriciapolacco.com/books/falker/falker_index.html

Paulson, E. J. (2005). Viewing eye movements during reading through the lens of chaos theory: How reading is like the weather. *Reading Research Quarterly* 3, 338-358

Pennington, B. F. & Lefly, D. L. (2001). Early reading development in children at family risk for dyslexia. *Child Development*, 72, pp. 816-833.

Polacco, P. (1998) *Thank you, Mr. Falker.* New York: Scholastic Books.

Pollard, A., & Filer, A. (1999). *The social world of pupil career. Strategic biographies through primary school.* London: Cassell.

Purcell-Gates, V. & Waterman, R. (2000) *Now we read, we see, we speak: portrait of literacy development in an adult Freirean-based class* (Mahwah, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum).

Pipher, Mary (2005). *Reviving Ophelia*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books:

Poplin, M. (1995). The dialectic nature of technology and holism: The use of technology for the liberation of the learning disabled. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, Vol. 18, 131-140

Pressley, M., El-Dinary, P.B., Gaskins, I., Schuder, T., Bergman, J., Almasi, L., & Brown, R. (1992). Beyond direct explanation: Transactional instruction of reading compreh:ension strategies. *Elementary School Journal*, 92, 511-554.

Quinn, Patricia & Nadeau, K. Eds. (2002) *Gender issues and AD/HD.* Silver Springs, MD: Advantage Books.

Ramos, Reyes (1973) A case in point: An ethnomethodological study of a poor Mexican American family. *Social Science Quarterly*, 53,905-919.

Rasinski, T. V. A brief history of reading fluency. In S. J. Samuels & A. E. Farstrup (eds.) *What research has to say about fluency instruction* (pp. 4-23). International Reading Association: 2006.

Raskind, M. & Higgins, E. (19930"Speaking to read: The effects of speech recognition technologyon the reading and spelling performance of children with learning disabilities." *Annals of Dyslexia*, 49.

Reutzel, D.R., & Cooter, R.B., Jr. (1991). Organizing for effective instruction: The reading workshop. *The Reading Teacher*, *44*(8), 548–554.

Rex, L. A. (2003). Loss of the creature: The obscuring of inclusivity in classroom discourse. Communication Education, 52, 30–46.

Rueda, R., & Meh:an, H. (1986). Metacognition and passing: Strategic interactions in the lives of students with learning disabilities. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 17*(3), 145-165.

Rutter, M. (2004). Sex differences in developmental reading disability: New findings from four epidemiological studies. *Journal of the American Medical Association,* 291, 16.

Sadker, Myra and David Sadker (1994) *Failing at fairness: How American schools cheat girls.* New York: Touchstone.

Siegel, M., & Fernandez, S.L. (2000). Critical approaches. In M. Kamil, P. Mosenthal, P.D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), Handbook of reading research (Vol. 3, pp. 141-151). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Silverman, L. (2002), *Upside-Down Brilliance: The Visual Spatial Learner.New York:Touchstone.*

Shaywitz, S.E., Fletcher, J.M., et al. (1999). Persistence of dyslexia: The Connecticut longitudinal study at adolescence. *Paediatrics*, 104, 1351- 9.

Shaywitz, S. E. (2003). *Overcoming Dyslexia.* New York: Vintage Book.

Shaywitz, S. E. (2003). Recognize boys' differences. *USA Today* Retrieved February 12, 2009, from the World WideWeb: http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2003-12-22-oppose_x.htm.

Singapore Dyslexia.Association. (2009). About Dyslexia. Retrieved February 15, 2009, from the World Wide Web: http://www.das.org.sg/aboutdyslexia/whatisdyslexia.htm.

Smith, F. (1982). *Understanding reading: A psycholinguistic analysis of reading and learning to read* (3rd ed.). New York: Holt, Rineh:art, & Winston.

Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.). (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Spear-Sterling, L & Sternberg, R. (1996) L. *Off track: When poor readers become learning disabled*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Sperling. M. (1995). Uncovering the role of role in writing and learning to write: One day in an inner-city classroom. *Written Communication*, 12, 93–133.

Stake, R (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stahl, S., & Miller, P. (1989). Whole language and language experience approaches for beginning reading: A quantitative research synthesis. *Review of Educational Research*, *59*, 87-116.

Stanovich, K.E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly* **21,** 360–406.

Stone, J. & Harris, K. (1991). These coloured spectacles: What are they for? *Support for Learning*, 6, 116-118.

Szatmari, P., Bartolucci, G., Bremner, R. (1989) Asperger's syndrome and autism: Comparison of early history and outcome. Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology, 31, 6, 709-720.

Torgesen, J. (1999). Phonologically-based reading disabilities: Toward a coherent theory of one kind of learning disability. In R.J. Sternberg & L. Spear-Swerling (Eds.), *Perspectives on learning disabilities* (pp. 231-262). New Haven, CT: Westview Press.

Tur-Kaspa, H., Weisel, A., & Segev, L. (1998). Attributions for feelings of loneliness of students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, 13, 89-94.

Urrieta, L. (2007). Identity Production in Figured Worlds: How some Mexican Americans become Chicana/o Activist Educators. *The Urban Review, 39*(2), 117-144.

Vadaboncoeur, J. A. (2005). Naturalise, restricted, packaged, and sold: Reifying the fictions of adolescent and adolescence. In J. A. Vadaboncoeur & L. P. Stevens (Eds.), *Reconstructing the adolescent: Sign, symbol, and body*. New York: Peter Lang.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). The genetic roots of thought and speech. In A. Kozulin (Trans. & Ed.), *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Weedon, C. (1987). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Wenger, E. (1999) Communities of Practice: Learning, meaning and identity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

West, T. G. (1991). In the mind's eye: Visual thinkers, gifted people with learning difficulties, computer images, and the ironies of creativity. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books

Wilcutt, E, & Pennington, B. (2000). Comorbidity of reading disability and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder: Differences by gender and subtype. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 33, 179-191.

Wilhelm, J. D. (1997). *"You gotta BE the book": Teaching engaged and reflective reading with adolescents*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Yin, R.(1989). *Case study research design and methods.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

APPENDIX

Interview Prompts

1. Describe yourself as a person and a student?
2. Explain some of your experiences as a young girl learning to read.
3. Describe the first time you realized that you were actually struggling with the process?
4. How did your reading compare with your peers?
5. Describe being in an oral reading situation with other students?
6. What would you do if you didn't know a word?
7. What would your teacher do?
8. What would your peers do?
9. How did you respond to them?
10. Think back to first grade, can you remember your first grade teacher? What is earliest memory of being a reader where you were asked to read out loud, and you had these first feelings of difficulty.
11. Describe methods you used to preview the material before you were asked to read.
12. Some teachers say that students who don't learn to read well just don't try hard enough. What would you say to them?
13. Describe your relationship with your peers and teacher.
14. Tell me about your friendships.
15. Which of your friends knew you were struggling with reading?
16. What did you tell them about your struggles?
17. What would you do if you had an assignment and you couldn't read what to do?
18. How did your friends help you with class work or homework?
19. How did your friends help you when you didn't understand an assignment?
20. How often would you feel compelled to ask for help?
21. Which of your family members knew you were struggling to read?
22. Who was the first adult to recognize that you were struggling as a reader?
23. Did anyone offer any help?
24. How did you feel about getting help?
25. Describe the people outside friends and family that you would seek out for help with homework or assignments.
26. How do you react to the statement, "she just needs to try harder?"

27. What was your favorite subject in school? Why was it your favorite?
28. Think for a minute about what you think the ideal reading teacher would be like for someone who has had the same difficulties that you have had learning to read. What would they do, how would they help you, what would you have liked someone to do for you that didn't happen?
29. What experiences stand out in your memory that you had while learning to read?
30. What would you say to your first grade teacher if you could sit down and talk with her?
31. Can you talk about your diagnosis of dyslexia?
32. What kinds of questions were answered for you when you received the diagnosis of dyslexia?
33. How would your life have been different if you had known sooner?
34. What questions are still left unanswered for you?
35. Why did it take so long to get a definitive diagnosis of dyslexia?
36. Once you were diagnosed, who did you tell about your difficulties learning to read?
37. Looking back, would you make the same decision?
38. What did you do to make sure that you weren't considered different?
39. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me today? I will transcribe our interview and bring it with me to our next session so you can make sure it is accurate. Thanks so much for your time. (at the end of both interviews)